

BEST STORY MAGAZINE IN AMERICA

# SMITH'S

MAGAZINE

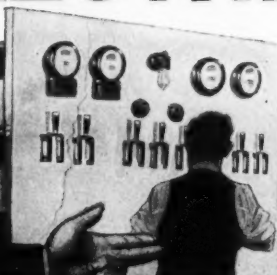
OCT., 1920  
20 CENTS



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# BE A CERTIFICATED ELECTRICIAN



## I WILL TRAIN YOU AT HOME

### A real position like this—for you

The country needs thousands of trained, **Certificated Electricians** to fill good positions—and at big pay. It's all a matter knowing how, and I will teach you by my up-to-date, modern instruction. You can learn at home, without interfering with your regular work, by my highly successful method of **Home Instruction in Practical Electricity**. Prepare NOW, and be ready in a few months to earn your

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My book, "HOW TO BECOME AN EXPERT ELECTRICIAN," has started thousands of young men on the way to splendid success. A new edition of this book has just been printed. I want every young man interested in Electricity to have a copy and will send you one **ABSOLUTELY FREE AND PREPAID**. Write me to-day.

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As Chief Engineer of the Chicago Engineering Works I know exactly the kind of training a man needs to enable him to get and hold good positions, and to earn big pay. I have trained hundreds of men who are holding splendid electrical positions. Many are now successful **Electrical Contractors**.

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St: Send at once—fully prepaid and entirely free—complete particulars of your great offer for this month.

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Wishing is never going to make your dreams come true. You've got to **study—to learn**. A man is worth \$2 or \$3 a day from his neck down—and no more; but there is **no limit** to what he can be worth from his neck up.

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To every student who answers this ad I am giving a **Splendid Electrical Outfit** of standard size Electrical Tools, Instruments, Materials, etc., **absolutely free**. Furthermore, to every Electrical Student I give a truly **valuable** surprise that I cannot explain here.

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L. L. COOKE,  
Chief Engineer  
Dept. 430

**Chicago Engineering Works**  
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## YOU CAN DO IT

USE THIS "FREE OUTFIT" COUPON



**FREE  
TRIAL  
OFFER**

**Be Your Own Salesman and Save \$36—**

# New Oliver Typewriters for \$64

Let us send you a brand new Oliver Nine—the world-famous typewriter—for five days' free trial. Keep it or return it.

That is our plan in a nutshell. Our new plan—besides saving you \$36—makes it easy for every one to convince himself of Oliver superiority. No red tape—no money down. No salesman need influence you. No need to ever pay \$100 for a typewriter again.

## Prices Cut to Nearly Half— and Why

With greater production and huge financial resources, The Oliver Typewriter Company is the pace setter.

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This plan, we feel sure, is in keeping with modern demands. All will welcome such a sincere effort to reduce the High Cost of Typewriters.

## This is Our Offer

**No money down—easy monthly payments**

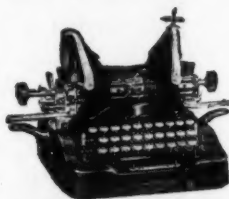
Maker and user deal direct. You are your own salesman. You pay yourself the \$36. Own this master typewriter at the rate of \$4 per month. The Oliver Nine itself must convince you. It is the greatest, the most durable, the most successful typewriter ever built. No finer can be bought for any price. It is a twenty-year development.

There is no need now to ever pay \$100 again for a new typewriter. The Oliver plan gives everyone an opportunity to own an Oliver. And at the lowest time payments.

This is the same machine used by the largest concerns. It has all the latest improvements.

For speed and fine workmanship it can't be beat.

If, after a trial of five days you are not satisfied—ship it back at our expense.



**Over 800,000 Sold**

## Do not confuse

This \$64 Oliver is our latest and best model. It is not a special model—but the identical machine that was \$100 before the war. Reduced selling expenses saves you \$36.

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**MAIL  
TODAY**

## 13 cents a day

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This is the first time in history that a new, never-used \$100 typewriter of the latest model has been offered at the price of cheaper or second-hand machines. It is cheaper to own than rent.

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Simply send in the coupon properly filled in. There is no red tape—no collectors—no bother. Keep the Oliver for \$4 per month. Or return it. It is up to you.

Mail the coupon today.

**The OLIVER Typewriter Company**  
737 Oliver Typewriter Bldg., Chicago

## FREE TRIAL COUPON

**THE OLIVER TYPEWRITER COMPANY**

**737 Oliver Typewriter Bldg., Chicago, Ill.**

☐ Ship me a new Oliver Nine for five days free inspection. If I keep it, I will pay \$4 at the rate of \$4 per month. The title to remain in you until fully paid for.

My shipping point is..... This does not place me under any obligation to buy. If I choose to return the Oliver, I will ship it back at your expense at the end of five days.

☐ Do not send a machine until I order it. Mail me your book—"The High Cost of Typewriters—The Reason and the Remedy," your de luxe catalog and further information.

Name .....

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City..... State.....

Occupation or Business.....

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Vol. XXXI

# SMITH'S MAGAZINE

No. 6

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YEARLY SUBSCRIPTION \$2.00

SINGLE COPIES 20 CENTS

Monthly publication issued by SMITH PUBLISHING HOUSE, 79-89 Seventh Avenue, New York City.  
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 Britain. All Rights Reserved. Publishers everywhere are cautioned against using any of the contents of this magazine  
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 under Act of Congress of March 3, 1879. Canadian subscription, \$2.50. Foreign, \$2.72.

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# An Amazingly Easy Way to Earn \$10,000 a Year Let Me Show You How FREE

TO the average man the \$10,000 a year job is only a dream. Yet today there are a surprising number of men earning five figure salaries who were merely dreaming of them a short while ago. The secret of their success should prove a startling revelation to every ambitious man who has ever aspired to get into the \$10,000-a-year class.

There is nothing "different" about the man whose salary runs into five figures. He is made of the same stuff as you and I. For example, take J. P. Overstreet, of Dallas, Texas. A few short years ago he was a police officer earning less than \$1,000 a year. Today his earnings are in excess of \$1,000 a month—more than \$12,000 a year. C. W. Campbell, Greensburg, Pa., was formerly a railroad employe on a small salary—last month his earnings were \$1,562.

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I took your course two years ago. Was earning \$15 a week clerking. Am now selling many of the largest firms in the U. S. I have earned more than \$100 in a day. You secured me my position. Our Sales Manager is a graduate of yours.—J. L. DeBontis, 1628 S. Crawford Ave., Chicago, Ill.

**Earned \$1,562 in Thirty Days**  
My earnings for the past thirty days are \$1,562.00 and I won second prize in March although I only worked two weeks during that month.—C. W. Campbell, Greensburg, Pa.

**Earned \$1,000 in Six Weeks**  
My earnings for the past six weeks over \$1,000 and over \$1,500 for the last six weeks, while last week my earnings were \$246.00. I have traveled eleven months out of the year, working 3 days each week. The N. S. T. A. did me out of a rut where I was earning less than \$1,000 a year and showed me how to make a success.—J. F. Overstreet, Dallas, Texas.

Mr. Overstreet, Mr. Campbell, and the others whose letters you see on this page are all successful salesmen. They have stepped into the \$10,000-a-year class—and they never sold goods before! It is hard to believe that such big success could come so quickly and easily. Yet it was all amazingly simple! Ask them the secret of their sudden success. They will tell you they owe it to the National Salesmen's Training Association. This is an organization of top-notch salesmen and sales managers formed expressly for the purpose of training men to sell and helping them to good selling positions. It has taken hundreds of men from all walks of life and made them Master Sales-

men—it has lifted them out of the rut and shown them the way to magnificent earnings, to fascinating careers and big selling positions.

## We Train You And Help You Land A Job

What these men have done, you can do! In your spare time at home you can easily master the secrets of selling that make Star Salesmen. Whatever your experience has been—whatever you may be doing now—whether or not you think you can sell—just answer this question: Are you ambitious to earn \$10,000 a year? Then send me your name quick! I will prove to you without cost or obligation that you can easily become a Star Salesman. I will show you how the Salesmanship Training and Free Employment Service of the N. S. T. A. will help you to wonderful success in Selling.

## Free Book on Salesmanship

Just mail the coupon or write for our great illustrated Book, "A Knight of the Grip," which we will send you Free. Let us prove to you that regardless of what you are doing now you can quickly become a Star Salesman. Let us show you how you too, can step into the ranks of the big money makers of business. See how easily you can learn this fascinating, big pay profession at home in your spare time. Learn what we have done for others and what we stand ready to do for you. Don't put it off until tomorrow—write us today. Mail the coupon at once.

**National Salesmen's Training Association,  
Dept. 4-R, Chicago, Ill., U. S. A.**

.....  
**National Salesmen's Training Association,  
Dept. 4-R, Chicago, Ill., U. S. A.**

Please send me, without any obligation on my part, your free book "A Knight of the Grip" and full information about the N. S. T. A. system of Salesmanship Training and Employment Service. Also a list showing lines of business with openings for salesmen.

Name .....  
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# Get Into the Auto Game

## Earn \$50.00 to \$100.00 a Week

Don't be content with an ordinary salary when you can get *big money* in the auto game. This is the biggest year in the history of the automobile industry. Thousands of men who know something about cars are needed to keep them in repair. Big jobs are open everywhere. Get into the game and open a garage of your own.

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Starting and Lighting Systems.  
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Design and Equipment.  
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Storage Batteries.  
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Commercial Trucks.  
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You don't have to pay one cent in advance. Just mail the coupon and use the books for a whole week in your home or shop—then decide whether you want to keep them or not. If you like the books, send us only \$2.80 and \$3.00 each month until \$29.80 is paid. If you don't like them, just ship them back at our expense and you won't owe us a cent. Along with each set goes FREE a membership in this society, worth \$12.00. Mail the coupon now, before the membership is filled.

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Chicago, U. S. A.

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Dept. A-597 Chicago, U. S. A.  
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# SMITH'S MAGAZINE

Volume 31

OCTOBER, 1920

Number 6

## "Control to Beat Bernhardt"

By Louise Kennedy Mabie

Author of "The Things of Pride," "The Lights Are Bright," etc.

ILLUSTRATED BY R. VAN BUREN

**Here's a new sort of heroine—and you'll love her. This is what we call a real story, one of the greatest of the year, and one we take special pleasure in presenting to the readers of SMITH'S.**

MISS MYRTILLA BYNG has green eyes set wide apart, high cheek bones, and a pointed little chin which means business. As a child she was so thin, so sharp, so meager that comfortable old ladies in passing limousines would put up eyeglasses in shocked silence to regard Myrtilla's bones. Of course, this was in the long ago, before the girls in East One Hundred and Ninth Street wore fiber silk stockings every day, before Myrtilla had a "career" or a sable cape or anything very much except a cool little head, steady little legs, and a chance now and then at one of Mrs. Israel's cinnamon buns.

The "picture" magazines, writing Myrtilla up, place her début, her world première so to speak, early in her ninth year.

"Come back here, you Irisher Myrtie Bing!" screamed little Bella Israels, dancing in impotent frenzy upon the fourth-story fire escape. "Turn around and come right away back here, you Irisher Che-rist-ian Myrtie Byng! You're bustin' our new closeline!"

But Myrtie was as much beyond com-

ing back as any transatlantic air racer dependent upon a single motor, for Myrtie was sailing across from the fourth-story fire escape to the opposite clothes pole dependent upon a single pulley.

Little Bella Israels' clamor drew the audience, but Myrtilla nailed them to their window sills. By the time Ma Byng reached the basement doorway, Myrtilla had reached the clothes pole and was clinging to one of the iron supports which the "put-yer-line-up" man habitually used. Ma Byng, looking up, threw her apron over her head and began to pray. Various boys fought to mount the clothes pole. Mr. Israels, appearing on the fire escape, cuffed the vociferously useless Bella over the ears and carefully tested her new clothes-line.

"Get th' cop!" yelled the kitchen windows. "Get th' 'hookan' ladder.' Look at the little divil grin!"

A Greek fruit vender came running with a peach basket. The next-door janitor appeared with a rope. But it was Myrtilla who rescued herself by the simple process of descending, one



"Sure-footed little goat," remarked the red-faced cop. "Say, take that sail again, kiddo, and you'll dock between a pair of green lamps."

by one, the "line-up" man's iron supports.

"Sure-footed little goat," remarked the red-faced cop. "Say, take that sail again, kiddo, and you'll dock between a pair of green lamps."

Myrtilla looked the red-faced cop up

and down. Her coppery hair gleamed in the sunshine. Her green eyes gleamed. Her little white teeth gleamed as she spat her defiance.

"Aw, fly back t' yer coop!" said Myrtilla sincerely. "Can't ye leave a lady take a little joy ride? I'm goin'



up on the roof now and jump acrost to fifty-two fer some exercise."

The red-faced cop, rubbing his bald spot, looked down upon Myrtilla much as Mount Sir Donald might look down upon a furious little thunderstorm fussing away in the valley below. But Ma Byng solved the immediate problem. Attaining the group about Myrtilla by her natural maternal surge at such a moment, Ma Byng dropped to her knees and, picking out Myrtilla's stockings cleverly from the surrounding forest of hosiery, she seized her offspring by the ankles and bore her, considerably wrong side up, from the scene. The kitchen windows yawned and chaffed Mrs. Israels. After all, the affair had proved disappointing. No ambulance had been necessary.

It was when Myrtilla, angular, level-headed, prickly tempered, was in her last year at "public" and was planning to go on to "normal" if Ma Byng could hold out long enough, that Jackie Burstein's big car broke down, late one afternoon, in East One Hundred and Ninth Street. Immediately, from comparative emptiness, there grew a superlative crowd. Small boys infested the running boards and freely advised the chauffeur. Small girls slid down brass stoop railings and played tag around the lamp-post. Myrtilla, with Bella Israels and the last Israels baby, leaned far out over the Israels' front window sill.

"Gee, Myrtie!" sighed Bella Israels. "What it would seem like to ride around in such a bus!"

"He ain't ridin' around in it," said Myrtie, who was inclined to be literal. "He's stuck."

"Gee, look at the fur rug," sighed Bella. "What would happen if you could own such fur rugs!"

"Moths," suggested Myrtilla.

"Moths should worry me with my fur rugs! I'd send my fur rugs on storage," said Bella competently. "Look where

he shakes ashes off his cigar, a big diamond he's got on his little finger."

"I want t' see the di'mond," called the third-from-the-last Israels baby, tugging at Bella's scanty skirt. But Bella shook off the small, clinging hand.

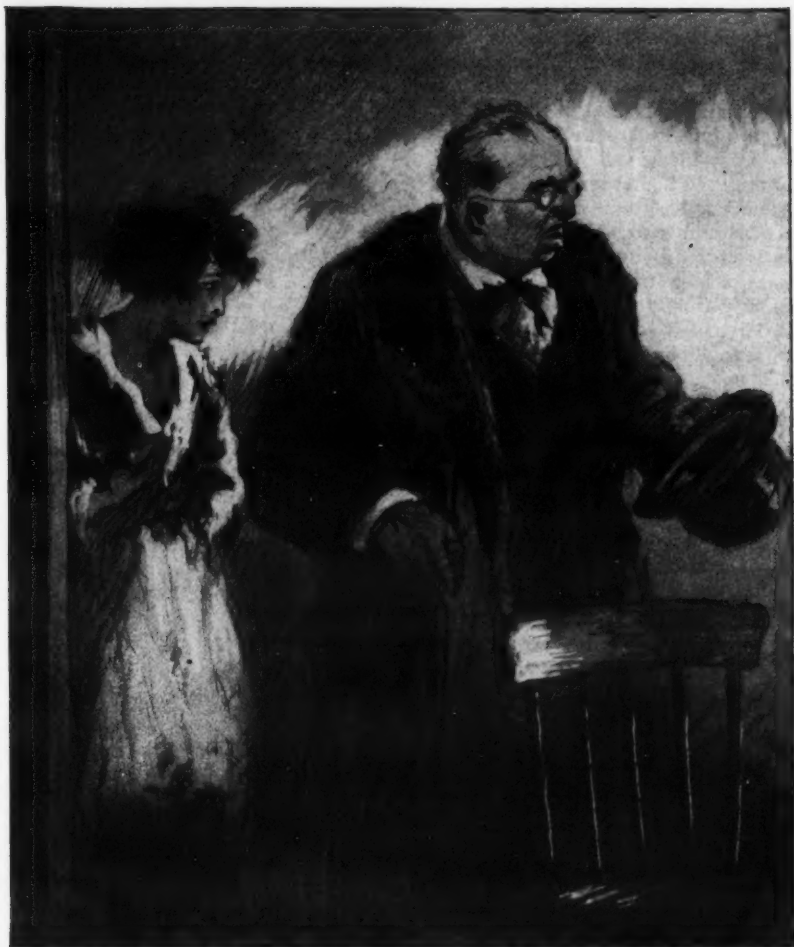
"A fur collar to his coat he's got," sighed Bella. "See where he stands up to unbutton it—the fur lining——"

"I want t' see the fur collar," called the third-from-the-last Israels baby. But Bella, swinging sideways an experienced foot, absently pushed the small figure away. Bella's whole sordid little soul was responding to the richness of the furs and the blaze of the winking diamond. Even Myrtie did not notice until some one in the crowd below, glancing up, shrieked and pointed. And some one in the frowsy flat behind shrieked and came heavily running.

For the third-from-the-last Israels baby, climbing to the vacant ledge of the other window, had climbed too far, had lost his balance and was pitching headlong. Time seemed to stand still while Sollie Israels was falling.

But a contractor with a leaning toward the Corinthian had built an ornate coping above the delicatessen store. And the Israels baby chanced to be wearing his brother Abie's gray sweater. The gray sweater caught on the coping. Fate, on the job at the critical moment in two lives, detained the Israels baby just long enough for Myrtie to swing forth from an awning rope, to dangle awfully over space for a moment, to calculate her distance, let go her rope, and land on the coping. Fate, her head over one shoulder in hasty flight, gave Myrtie one further jot of time in which to unhook the gray sweater and get the child into her arms.

The crowd choked, gasped, began feebly to cheer. Sollie Israels began feebly to cry. Mrs. Israels, successfully pulled back by Bella over her window sill, fainted. Myrtilla, a little white, but beginning to smile, leaned back against



"Say—what d'ye think we are?" burst forth Ma Byng. "I'm a respectable widdy lady—I been here with yer

the brownstone wall for a moment to get her breath. And Jakie Burstein, standing in his big car, looked up at Myrtilla.

"A gold mine!" he chanted softly to himself. "A world-beater! Nerve? Her middle name! A leopard-skin coat—maybe later sables— Young

enough to stand earrings. Ease—quiet—punch—personality! And control of a situation? My Gawd! Control to beat Bernhardt!"

Ma Byng and Myrtilla were at supper that evening in their basement rooms when Jakie Burstein knocked. Myrtilla opened the door.



janitress here nine years. My little girl's a good girl. Say, what d'ye think we are, comin' in fresh talk?"

"Wanta make a hundred a week?" said Jakie Burstein, who believed in letting people have it between the eyes.

Myrtilla raised her cream puff and bit into it slowly.

"Maybe later two hundred!" added Jakie Burstein, slant eyes on the girl's quiet. "Whether you work or not?"

"Say, chase yerself out a' here!" burst forth Ma Byng, rising from her position behind the checked tablecloth. "What d'ye think we are? I'm a respectable widdy lady—I been janitress here nine years. My little girl's a good girl. Say, what d'ye think we are, comin' in here with yer fresh talk?"

"Shut up, ma!" said Myrtie dispassionately. "And put down the teapot. This guy ain't fresh—or funny. Two hundred a week's serious. Give me a chance, ma, to find out if he's crazy. What's the big idea, mister? Am I to sing or play the flute?"

"Little girl," said Jakie Burstein earnestly, taking off his hat and producing a neatly folded handkerchief, "all ye gotta do is be yerself—just yer natural self before—before a camera. Just let yer personality register. It's God's truth, kid—that's all ye gotta do! Like," he added slowly, "like ye did this afternoon."

"Oh," said Myrtilla—a long-drawn "o-oh" of complete understanding. "If I break my neck the first week, does ma get the two hundred?" she asked after a moment.

"Ma gets the one hundred," said Jakie Burstein.

"Good night, nurse!" said Myrtilla, preparing to shut the door. But Mr. Burstein's broad foot prevented.

"Say, don't get rough, kid," he urged without reproach. "Say, there's no hurry over this. I got all evening. You can't insult me. I ain't that kind. If I got excited and said two hundred when I meant one, why, I'm a sport. My boy, Benno, he gets sometimes excited, too. It runs in the family. But me and my boy Benno's words is good fer most any figure. If you don't believe me, go to my bank and ask the cashier in spectacles any day between nine and three—Jacob Burstein & Son, Occidental Film Company—ask the president in his rolling mahogany chair——"

Myrtie, regarding his perspiring sincerity in silence, popped what remained of a cream puff into her mouth.

"Walk in," said Myrtie, her enunciation considerably muffled, "and sit down, mister. He ain't crazy, ma. Mr. Israel's talks like that with his hands and works his face. Have some tea? Wait till I get ye a clean cup."

"A gold mine!" crowed Jakie Burstein to himself as he proceeded to overlap a kitchen chair. "A world-beater! Cool? Cool as cucumbers in the ice box. Sharp as gimlets. Nerve—personality—maybe even brains. And control? Control to beat Bernhardt!"

Across the river the glass roofs of the Occidental studios winked and beckoned in the morning sun. A blue haze lay over the far Jersey hills. Below the Drive, fussy freight engines puffed and snorted. Before the door of the Palatial Apartments stood a car which bore the relationship to ordinary cars that the Woolworth Building does to ordinary skyscrapers, for the car was not only stupendous, but it was so beautiful that one forgave its size. It was magnificent. It was dignified. And in line, in color, in operation, it was quiet.

Within the car, close wrapped in furs, sat a discontentedly pretty dark girl, waiting. Beside the car stood the apartment house doorman, a fur rug over one arm, waiting. Several small boys, struck by the car and a certain electricity in the atmosphere, decided to wait also. And presently from the wide doorway of the Palatial tripped a young person in blue serge and a trim little hat.

"Pretty late for a working girl, Sam," smiled the young person in answer to the doorman's greeting. "But Adolph will make it up when he crosses the river, won't you, Adolph? Hello, Isabella, muh deah! Tired waiting? Hello, boys! What you looking at?"

For by this time the boys were nothing but look. Their eyes popped. Their mouths hung open. They had practically ceased to breathe. They had been poured into one mold and had come out concentrated essence of stare. As the girl in blue serge smiled down upon them, one freckled face gasped, gulped, and rose to the conversational surface.

"Say, lady," he managed, "ain't yuh—are yuh——"



"Beg pardon, Miss Byng," said Angelo nervously, "but your chauf thinks you may not be feelin' fit. He says you've been sittin' here this long time."

"I are," said the girl in blue serge.

"N—not—M—Myrtilla——"

"Byng!" exploded the girl in blue serge, stepping into the car.

"Well—say— How d'ye do that s-stunt on the telegraft pole? Me big brudder says no goil can do them things—it's gotta be a guy dressed up. He says yuh double on us."

"Tell your big brother I never dou-

ble," said the girl in blue serge firmly. "I do my own stunts."

"Well, say—wait a minute. In the 'Clutch of Fear'—that place where ye clumb the clift——"

"I clumb," said the girl in blue serge. "Tell your big brother I nearly lost my life and entirely ruined my finger nails. Tell him Myrtilla Byng is on the level. Tell him I'm straight. Get that?"

"Do—we—get—it?" chanted a curbstone chorus come ecstatically to life. "We'll say we do!"

"Nobody's got nothin' on you, Myrt!"

"'Queen of the Movies' is right!"

"I seen yuh when yuh went t' the top o' the hook-an'-ladder fer Liberty Bonds."

"Good-by, kids," waved Myrtilla.

"Good-by, Queen," piped the kids.

"Good-by, Myrt. We'll tell the world!"

Isabella Israels drew her furs up more closely about her throat and shivered.

"How can you bother, Myrtilla?" she said languidly. "There's no advertising value in a bunch of ragged kids."

"No, but—I like ragged kids," said Myrtilla. "Did Adolph take up the fruit to your mother?"

"Oh, sure. She said to thank you."

"How's Sollie's cough?"

"He keeps me awake nights through that thin wall and I get rings in under my eyes if I don't get my sleep. We got to move to a better flat."

"We've got to get Sollie away," said Myrtilla firmly. "Somewhere where it's warm. I'll talk to your mother. You see, Sollie's sort of my boy."

"Sure! Go as far as you like," conceded Isabella. "How'm I looking to-day?"

"Peachy," said Myrtilla sincerely. "Say, but I like the new lid."

When Isabella smiled a dimple came out. When Isabella gleamed she became a beauty. She gleamed momentarily now.

"She soaked me on the gourah," said Isabella, clouding presently, "but it brings out my eyes. Shadowy effects do. You're awful plain to-day, Myrt. That serge—that hat! You don't give what looks you got a chance. And I caught nearly a chill sitting so long." Isabella paused. "When I star," she added impressively, "the first thing I buy me is a car of my own like this—only maybe bigger."

"I was sorry to be late," said Myrtilla slowly and then stopped. "There's a big stunt on for this morning," she added presently, "and ma got word of it over the phone while I was in the tub. I had to jolly her out of her scare. She gets the jumps. Poor, old ma!"

"What's the stunt?" asked Isabella.

"Fight on a rope stretched from a tenement set," said Myrtilla. "Five flights up. Teddy Winthrop got cold feet, so Angelo had to rustle an acrobat to double for him. I do a fall, but of course there's a net."

There was a silence. Then Isabella shivered.

"Gee!" said she. "Regular things I can do—automobiles, freight cars, even once an engine! But none of that shootin' star stuff for mine. I got to feel the ground somewhere near."

"Oh, you'll work up to things gradually," said Myrtilla. "It's been a long road—a pretty hard road! Remember how I began as a kid back there in One Hundred and Ninth Street? Remember those cinnamon buns? I can smell 'em now. Gee, but I was a hungry kid!" Myrtie stretched out one hand and dropped it on Isabella's knee. "Bella, muh deah," she said lightly, "you're the oldest friend I've got."

"We ain't so old," snapped Bella.

"Not in years, perhaps," said Myrtie, "but measured by what we know, by what we've been through—" She patted Bella's unresponsive knee gently. "Remember how you came to the studio that first time and I trotted you up to Burstie? Extra girl—and then you did that little flower dance in the cabaret scene. I've got good news for you to-day, Isabella. Burstie's putting you in as ingénue with Lila Lemoyne."

"You—asked it off him!" said Isabella in a choked voice. "You—asked it!"

"Oh, not exactly I didn't," said Myrtilla. "Put it down that he had meant to all along and I reminded him."



"And he throws me that!" cried Isabella passionately, unexpectedly, almost ferociously. "Like a crust to a beggar—like a bone to a gutter dog—because you asked it off him! All my life you've stood in my light! All my life I've played to you a second fiddle! I'll give it to you straight now we're talking. You got me into this here game. Two years I've slaved at it, and now Burstie throws me a crust!"

"But, Isabella," put in Myrtie, amazed, "no one could expect him to star you yet. It wouldn't be business."

"He starved you from the start!" flashed Bella.

"Well, but that was different," explained Myrtie earnestly. "I had a sort of natural gift. It wasn't much of a gift, but I was quick and strong and I didn't get dizzy. My line happened to be what Burstie needed. So he played me big."

"Don't rub it in," said Bella, her voice jerking, shaking, breaking. "Don't—crow. I know he played you big. The kids back there said something. 'Queen of the Movies' is right.' You've hogged the world for Myrtilla Byng, but thank God there's a corner of it left! There's some one can appreciate me. There's some one who'll even *star* me."

"Who?" asked Myrtie, although she knew.

"Benno," said Isabella.

There was a silence. With hands that shook, with fingers that stumbled, Isabella unclasped her beaded bag and examined her eyelashes in a tiny mirror. Myrtie sat without stirring, staring straight before her. Benno—the light of old Burstie's eyes, the son of old Burstie's long-lost, still-beloved wife, the very core and center of old Burstie's life! Benno—artistic, attractive, spoiled, unstable! Myrtie, staring at the straight road ahead, tried to swallow away a sudden lump in her throat. Benno—and the infinite selfishness which lay in Isabella, the rapacity with

which Isabella wanted things, the ruthlessness she used in getting them!

"The boy can't do you any good with his father," said Myrtie at length. "The old man's a rock when it comes to business."

"But I can do the father a lot of harm with the boy," said Isabella competently. "For two months," she added, powdering her nose, "Benno has been going crazy over me."

"But he's got such a nice little wife," said Myrtie weakly.

"Wives!" said Isabella. Closing her beaded bag with a little snap, she laughed shortly. Picking a thread from her satin skirt she blew it lightly into oblivion. "When all her life a girl has been starved—say, for jewels, and all of a sudden a Tiffany show case is opened for her, will wives stop her from grabbing? When all her life a girl has played a second fiddle and some one comes to her and whispers, 'You're beautiful! You're wonderful! Together we can beat the world!' will wives hold her back? Or fathers?" Again Isabella laughed shortly. "Come up to date, Myrtie," she begged. "Get into the procession. Look Broadway in the face. Domestic stuff went out with 'The Old Homestead.'"

"But he's got such a new little kid," said Myrtie weakly.

"Kids!" scoffed Isabella. "Remember how I minded Abie and Sollie and Isadore! How I never played even hopscotch without a baby in my arms? Talk kids to somebody whose life hasn't been soured boiling their bottles, whose left shoulder isn't higher than her right from cartin' 'em around. There's too many kids as it is. You can't reach me with that line, Myrtie. There's one thing I do, if I wreck the whole Burstein outfit."

"What?" asked Myrtie, although she knew.

"I star," said Isabella.

After that there seemed to be noth-

ing more to say. And Myrtie was never a talkative person. Bella hummed a little jazz tune and Myrtie stared at the straight road ahead. When they drew up at the studio Bella pulled up her furs, adjusted her shadowy hat, and gracefully rose.

"Here's where I take a good aim and swat old Burstie with his crust," she said as she stepped out of the car.

"Bella, wait," called Myrtie softly, hurriedly. "P-promise me to—to hold

It was Angelo, assistant director, who broke into Myrtie's quiet.

"Beg pardon, Miss Byng," said Angelo nervously, "but your chauff' thinks you may not be feelin' fit. He says you've been sittin' here this long time. He beat it in for me. We're all set to shoot the big show."

Late that afternoon, with the big show supremely and safely over, Angelo approached his chief and permitted himself to speak.



"Honest, Benno, lately I can't get that girl's number! Ten days ago she asks me—in earnest, Benno—to star this here stick, Isabella Israels."

off for a week, to let Benno alone and not—not say anything to the old man—just for a week!"

Bella, adjusting her shadowy hat in the sunshine, smiled at Myrtilla and very gently shook her head.

"I'll pay you five hundred dollars," added Myrtilla.

Bella's eyes opened rather wide and then discreetly lowered themselves to her beaded bag.

"That's different again," said Bella competently. "Send the check around to my dressing room this morning."

"Take it from me," said Angelo to his chief, "a genius, even the kind that rambles on a rope, is the other word for a nut. Whad d'ye think the queen says to me when I found her this mornin' dreamin' her life away in her big boat, with us holdin' back the clock by main stren'th?"

"Shoot," said the director.

"Wait till you hear it," said Angelo. "Don't women beat the world? On the level, she says to me: 'Angelo,' she says, 'do you smell cinnamon buns?'"

"Anything can happen in a week," said Myrtie to the stars that night, as she opened her wide windows toward the river.

"Something's got to happen in four days," said Myrtie as she brushed out her coppery hair upon the third morning.

"Whatever it is, it'll happen to-day if I start it myself," decided Myrtie with a touch of desperation upon the fourth morning. And there you have our Myrtie.

Ma was sipping her coffee, both elbows upon the polished table, when the telephone insistently rang.

"If we pay the Jap to run races with you to the phone," suggested ma with some asperity, when Myrtie came slowly back, "let him win once in a while or he'll get sore and leave."

"Aw, cut it out, ma," said Myrtie.

"You're hidin' somethin' on me, Myrtie," wailed ma of a sudden, banging down her coffee cup and pushing back her chair. "You're holdin' a stunt back on me."

"I'm not, ma," protested Myrtie. "No stunts to-day. Honest, ma."

"You're thinkin'," cried ma, pointing a bony forefinger. "You're plannin'. There's a look in yer eye——"

"Aw, ma," begged Myrtie. "For goodness sake!"

"It's the river," cried ma, veering the forefinger toward the wide windows. "It's a duckin' in the deep water in a runaway car off a ferryboat. It was the stunt fella with the Eyetalian name on the phone!"

"Ma, hold on to yourself, for pity's sake," said Myrtie. "It was only Benno on the phone to say his dad's got the rheumatism again in his foot and I'm to stop there on my way out to the studio."

"Well, for the love a' Mike, why didn't ye say so before?" asked ma mildly, subsiding as instantly as she had risen. For ma was Irish. "Gee, the scares I get in this business! Pour yer

ole ma out another cup a' cawfey, Myrtie."

It was pretty little Mrs. Benno herself who ushered Myrtie into the big sunny library, where Burstie in a huge armchair before the fire impatiently awaited her.

"My foot on the velvet stool," warned Burstie, pointing to that prominent object. "If you should bump it, Myrtie, right away I am not responsible. Lilla, a chair for our Myrtie. A sight for sore eyes to see you, my dear. Next week I promise you begin on 'The Girl with Wings,' the greatest story we got yet. Be sure the chair goes on my good side, Lilla. Cigars they still give me, Myrtie, because they gotta, but sausages—no. Red meats—no. Grapefruits—no. Mush my little daughter here feeds me with, Myrtie, in bowls. Be glad you don't come yet to bowls, Myrtie. Lilla, our little cuss to show Myrtie. You sure wanta see our baby we got here, Myrtie? Sure, can't you hear her say she wants to see the baby, Lilla, whether the little cuss cuts her teeth yet or not?"

It was a dear baby. It snuggled down just right into Myrtie's arms. It pulled at her hair. It almost laughed. Myrtie kissed it just once in a crease of its soft little neck. It was carried away finally, its head bobbing over Lilla's shoulder. Myrtie heard again quite plainly Isabella's voice as she looked after the bobbing head. "Kids?" Isabella was saying competently. "There's too many kids as it is."

Burstie, even helpless in an armchair, was a hound for work. Burstie, even under the softening disadvantage of a dressing gown, was a rock when it came to business. It took courage for Myrtie even to mention Isabella Israel's name. It took a very good brand of heroism for Myrtie to suggest that Burstie should star Isabella Israel.

"Star Israel's? Star—Israel's?" cried Burstie, incredulous when he was at last

convinced that he had heard correctly. "Are you gone daffy in the head, Myrtie, that you should think up such propositions, let alone spring them? A million in advertising wouldn't ram that stick down the public's throat. If it wouldn't jar my foot I could laugh, Myrtie, at the scream it would be for any business man to star Israels."

"But she's—she's so pretty," suggested Myrtie weakly. "She—she's got such a lovely dimple."

"Dimples!" scoffed Burstie. "And are you such a noodlyhead, Myrtie, that after years in this business you get don't know that the fans demand more as dimples?"

"She's got more," said Myrtie.

"What more has she got?" asked Burstie, spreading out his hands. "Brains? Personality? Nerve? Punch? Control? Why, she's cross, Myrtie. She's selfish. She's sullen. Her soul's turned bitter on her lookin' outa the windows of her eyes at where she hasn't got to. And you can't fool the fans. What do you think has put you to the top, Myrtie? Has kept you on the top? Has got you loved from the Battery to the Golden Gate?"

"You, Burstie," said Myrtilla. "And my stunts, I guess."

"Me? Something. Stunts? Nothing," said Burstie. "It's your soul, my dear. It's your big heart, your thoughts for the other fella, your wish to give the other fella a chance. Why, you're fine clear through, Myrtie, and the fans get it. They know it. They love you for it. Don't you suppose them things register? More deeply as dimples, my dear—more deeply as dimples."

Myrtilla, rising quickly, dropped one hand on Burstie's shoulder and patted the shoulder gently. Then she walked over to a window and looked out at the trim little city yard, with its square of grassplot, its marble bench, its twin imported poplars in the clear fall sunshine.

"Come on my good side, Myrtie," said Burstie at length, clipping the end from a black cigar, "and we go over together 'The Girl with Wings.' Five thousand simoleons I paid the boy who wrote it, and already he kicks to the newspapers. Up to the climax, it's anybody's picture, but that climax, Myrtie, is fer you alone. The boy was born with the climax in his brain ready to jump out when you needed it, Myrtie. It gives me shivers up my backbones. The fans—even Washington—will tear up their chairs. Begin—page one hundred and ninety-four—"

"I think you're wrong about Isabella," interrupted Myrtie slowly. "I—I hope you'll reconsider."

But Burstie held up a peremptory hand.

"Enough words wasted on Isabella," said he impatiently. "Once for all, *no!* Nothing doing! Finally! Enough said!"

It was apparently a set of irrelevant circumstances which happened to dovetail with precision—Burstie's rheumatism which tied him to his armchair until he could get away to the baths at Hot Springs; Benno's soaring infatuation for Isabella; Myrtilla's quarrel with the director of "The Girl with Wings;" the director's resignation; and Myrtilla's prompt demand that Angelo be promoted to his place.

"Phone Myrtie for me, Benno," ordered his father, "to be at the station to-night when I take my train, and I talk this here Angelo idea out of her. Honest, Benno, lately I can't get that girl's number! The slants she takes! I give you a good laugh here, Benno, as a sample of her noodly propositions. Ten days ago Myrtie asks me—in earnest, Benno—to star this here stick, Isabella Israels."

But Benno did not register his good laugh. He reddened and fidgeted with a cuff link, but he did not even smile.



"The Girl with Wings" hung over dizzy space, clinging to her rope, swaying with the speed of the airship.



"A sight for sore eyes to see you, Burstie," said a cheerful, weak voice. "Damn it all!" cried Burstie.

He telephoned the studio and duly reported that Myrtie would be at the train that evening. But Myrtie was not at the train.

Burstie swore in three languages when his man jogged his foot with a suit case. He expressed himself with

the freest of free speech when it appeared that his compartment had been sold twice over and that the other ticket was in possession. But he was very close to tears when the train was on the tick of starting and Myrtilla had not come.





"Just because I cry easy, like a baby, do you think I ain't mad?"

"It's that there Moe Feldman, Benno, and his Reliance Films," choked Burstie. "For years that skunk has kept after Myrtie to get her away from us. Each week a bigger offer from him went into her wastebasket. Her ma spilled it to me. And now she's turning on us like

they all do, Benno. Sooner or later they all fall for the Feldmans of this here rotten world. All signs point to Myrtie's leaving us flat, Benno. Crazy ideas, crazy demands, and now she don't show up at my train!"

"Aw, Myrtie's all right, pop," protested Benno, who looked harassed. "Her car's been held up or something."

"Benno, only for you and Lilla and the little cuss, I don't care whether my rheumatism catches my heart next or not," confessed Burstie from his depths. "And this here starched nurse you wished on me has a drooping lid to her eyes that in a picture would take something fierce."

"Aw, pop, you'll be fine and dandy down there in no time," urged Benno. "Forget the business. Forget the studio. We'll get along O. K. I gotta get off now or be carried away, but, pop—about Angelo now—If you'd only sweeten Myrtie up with Angelo! She says he's honest a genius at stunt directing, pop!"

"Sweeten her up as far as you like," was Burstie's final concession. "What do I care who has ruined a great picture, if I come home nailed up in the baggage car?"

It was in Washington on his leisurely homeward journey some weeks later that Burstie, taxicabbing to his local office to gather up loose, neglected threads, chanced to see above a theater doorway an electric sign which deprived him tem-

porarily of all sensation and then permanently completed his cure.

A poster, the huge letters in green and red and gold, announced:

ISABELLA ISRAELS IN "THE GIRL WITH WINGS."

Burstie only vaguely recalled afterward that he thrust a five-dollar bill between the taxicab driver's celluloid collar and his adjacent, astonished neck. Neither was he ever really aware that he opened the door of the briskly moving cab and, unassisted for the first time in weeks, hurtled himself through space. Stumbling down the dim aisle of the crowded theater, with the girl usher's guiding hand on his arm, Burstie fell into a seat just as Israels, in a glittering, sequined gown, pressed the secret button hidden in the carving of the Chinese cabinet with an overmanicured finger and found the stolen papers.

"Page one hundred and sixty," muttered Burstie, clinging to his memory of the scenario as a shipwrecked man clings to a spar.

"Page one hundred and eighty-six," groned Burstie as Israels, her dimples showing against a background of leather helmet, her mouth set in a stiff smile, drove her car straight through the villain's ambush and scattered gun men in every direction.

"Stick! Stick! A dimple on a stick!" Burstie was quite unaware of muttering, half aloud. "Up to the climax, old stuff! Up to the climax, anybody's picture!"

"Page one hundred and ninety-four," whispered Burstie, hands clutching the top of the seat before him. "Here begins it the real picture! Ah! here comes it with speed!"

Here did it come, indeed—the kidnapping of Israels by the villain in a low-hung car, the race, with Winthrop, the hero, in close-pursuit, the abandonment of automobiles by both parties in favor of aeroplanes, a close-up of Israels in

her seat behind the villain, fastening down her helmet flaps, disappearing behind goggles. And then a switch seemed to be turned on suddenly in Burstie's brain and a great light flooded it.

"Oh, you girl," breathed Burstie softly to the screen. "Up to the climax anybody's picture! But now—oh, you girl!"

For "The Girl with Wings" was stealthily climbing from her seat behind the villain, was crawling to the edge of the plane, was hanging in dizzy space from a rope! Shrill whistles split the darkness of the theater. The balcony was beginning to stamp. The orchestra was hushed save for the long, breath-taking roll of a drum. "The Girl with Wings" hung over dizzy space, clinging to her rope, swaying with the speed of the airship. Wet beads dotted Burstie's forehead. The small boys in the audience were out of their seats now in order to yell the louder. A woman next to Burstie was saying that she couldn't look. A close-up of Winthrop's famous profile; a long shot of Winthrop's plane coming head-on; and, at last, "The Girl with Wings" released her rope and, at the lightning moment of moments, when she could do the thing and escape death, she dropped through space, landed on the hero's plane beneath, rolled to the edge, rolled slowly back, and lay very still.

"A fortune we make outa that picture, stick or no stick!" split the haze in Burstie's mind, as he reached the curb and hailed a taxi. At the station he sent two telegrams—a peremptory one to Benno, a diplomatic one to the boy who had written the scenario, offering him a contract for a term of years. He boarded the first train for New York. Many thoughts of several people punched holes through the haze in Burstie's mind during the run to New York, but curiously enough, Isabella Israels did not happen to be one of them.

Benno was waiting at the gates as





he had known Benno would be—a harassed-looking Benno with deep lines around his mouth.

"Gee, pop, you're looking fine!" Benno was beginning, but his father held up a peremptory hand.

"Nothing said between us, Benno, until I see her," said Burstie, forging through the crowd.

"But gee, pop," persisted Benno, "where's your bags—and your coon—and you're walkin' without a cane, pop! What's cured you all of a sudden?"

"The Girl with Wings," said Burstie ominously, stepping into his big car. "Is she home?"

"Sure, she's home," said Benno drearily. He gave an order to the chauffeur, stepped in himself, and slammed the door. "But it—it ain't fair to—blame it all on the girl, pop," said Benno as they turned up Seventh Avenue. "You see, pop, I'm in this thing, too."

"Sure, you're in it," said Burstie ominously. "Up to your neck and how much further I don't know yet. I talk to you together."

After that Benno relapsed into silent gloom. After that Benno ceased to be an active force and merely trailed after his father. It was his father who forged through the imposing marble entrance hall of the apartment house, past uniformed doormen, past elevator boys, past the impassive Jap who admitted them upstairs, through the subdued glitter of a long drawing-room, past a startled nurse in white linen, straight into a chintz sitting room beyond.

There was a wide couch in the chintz sitting room, and beside the couch old Burstie stopped and stood, looking down upon its banked pillows for a long moment of silence. Then he took off his hat.

"A sight for sore eyes to see you, Burstie," said a cheerful, weak voice.

Burstie opened his mouth to speak, closed his mouth, spread out his hands

and walked to a wide window. Looking out at the lights across the river, Burstie saw them blurred. Mopping his forehead, he surreptitiously mopped his eyes. Then he turned suddenly to face the room.

"Damn it all!" cried Burstie. "Just because I cry easy like a baby, do you think I ain't mad? Puttin' your young heads together to make a monkey of the old man! Starrin' a stick, and then doublin' for her on the real dope! When you landed on Winthrop's plane, what did you bust, Myrtie—your nerve?"

"Collar bone," said Myrtie, with a wry grin. "And a few ribs. But my nerve's not even sprained, Burstie. Am I—fired?"

"Fired!" cried Burstie. "I ain't got yet to the firin' point. I ain't got yet to any sense in this business. What I wanta know is why? *Why?* Why, by Jiminies, do you give up the greatest picture you got yet to a stick? Why risk your life for a stick even with dimples on her? Why join with Benno and the Eyetalian to boost a stick to a fortune and saddle me with a star I don't want?"

Myrtie raised herself upon her pillows, glanced briefly at Benno, then sank back again weakly.

"Israel's has had all sorts of wonderful offers since," said Myrtie irrelevantly. "She's on her way to California now. She's washed her hands of us—for good."

"Signed up with Moses Feldman," said Burstie.

Myrtie nodded.

Burstie sank down limply upon a chintz armchair. Through his grief and his bewilderment and his anger, a small sensation of warm comfort sifted.

"Feldman is stung," said Burstie.

And Myrtie nodded.

"Washington tore up their chairs at that climax," added Burstie, reaching for more comfort, "and Washington is dig-

nified. We make a pot a' money outa that picture, and in Angelo we get a great director dirt cheap."

And Myrtie nodded.

"But what gets me where I live is the tricks of it, Myrtie," said the old man, touching the bitterness at last. "Honest as daylight, fine clear through, I always counted on you to be, Myrtie. I—I banked on you for years, Myrtie, even when you was a flapper. And now out of a clear sky you double cross me."

Myrtie, turning her head, glanced toward Benno, and then away.

"I—I banked on you, Myrtie, sooner as on my own boy," managed Burstie with difficulty.

Myrtie turned her face into her pillows and lay very still. But Benno came forward. Benno for the moment ceased to be merely artistic, attractive, spoiled, unstable.

"Pop," began Benno through trembling lips. "Pop, I can't stand this no longer. It was all on account of me, pop. I got crazy over Israels, pop. There was something about the way she looked at me—I was crazy, pop. It's like a nightmare to me now that I was walk-in' through. Even Lilla went clear outa my mind—and the little cuss—the little

cuss, pop! I was ready to throw away everything for Israels, and she was play-in' me all along. She was bound to star. She'd 'a' sold her soul to star—she'd 'a' sold the shirt off her mother's back! But I couldn't see it! When Myrtie proposed puttin' her out in 'The Girl with Wings,' I was glad to fall for it, pop. I never looked ahead like Myrtie done. I never seen the handwriting on the wall. And when the offer came from Feldman, and I was such a fool as to beg her not to leave me, what do you think she done, pop? She laughed in my face, pop—and God! She called me a piker!"

Benno, artistic, attractive, spoiled, unstable, the tide of his misery rushing over the dikes of his manhood, buried his face in the curve of his arm and sobbed.

Sunk deep in the armchair, old Burstie looked across at Myrtie, and Myrtie, very white, but with just the dawn of a smile in her eyes, looked back at the old man.

"For Lilla—and the little cuss—and me," whispered old Burstie to himself. "Honesty like sunshine—loyalty no Feldman can touch—nerve—brains—heart—and control? Control to beat Bernhardt!"



## OF A POET

HE wrote his little words of flame  
To make an hour pass,  
And placed them in a golden frame  
Like bits of colored glass.

And who can tell what sorrow stirred  
Or happiness his heart?  
We only know that eyes are blurred,  
Or lips with laughter start.

HERMANN FORD MARTIN.

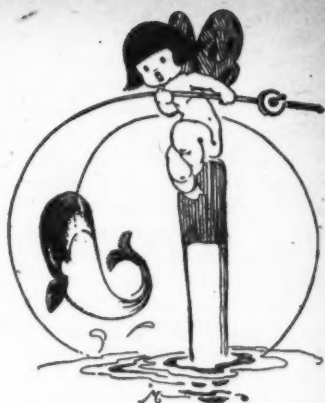


# If Life Were All Crises

By Hildegard Lavender

Author of "The New Snobbery," "Abandoning  
the Home," etc.

The tea-table group discusses a subject for human engineers. Why waste our heroic capabilities on the "big moments" only? How can the crisis spirit be made permanent?



THEY were exclaiming, the tea-table group, over the gloriously tragic end of a certain good-for-nothing's life. He had been an idler, a spendthrift, a profligate. He had yawned away the educational opportunities of his youth, without ambition even to excel in sports. He had loafed through the business opportunities of early maturity. His mother had died watching her bedroom door for his coming, the while he sat, sodden, in a saloon. He estranged his early associates, he cost his father endless trouble, robbed him of money, honor, and friends. He let his little patrimony run through his fingers and lived as only such as he know how to live—on contemptuous loans and shady tips and all the unwholesome husks of life.

Yet it had befallen him to have a hero's conclusion written to the dingy tale of his days. Loafing along beside a river one spring afternoon, he had heard a scream, had seen a bright head disappearing, and had, without counting the cost, put to use the one accomplishment of his boyhood when he had been a water rat. He had plunged in after a drowning boy and, though a cramp had crippled him, he had managed to hold the child until a boat had recov-

ered him. But he himself had been lost.

The tea-table group, most of whom had known his heartbroken mother, his proud, shamed old father, talked about it, about the marvel of finding hero stuff in such a self-made degenerate, about the miracle of the undying spark of beauty in the human soul. Only the doctor, who had not known him, was at first silent, then argumentative.

"It doesn't seem so wonderful to me," she said. "It seems ordinary, something to have been expected. Given the same chance, almost any one can meet a crisis rather magnificently. That is merely what might be called the human specialty. We prove it as individuals, we prove it as nations. The only, or, at any rate, the chief trouble with the world, is that there is a shortage of crises—a shortage of demands for our highest and most heroic behavior."

"A shortage of crises!" they protested.

"Yes, but there is!" declared the doctor with growing conviction, her own belief in her thesis expanding as she brought it out into the daylight of conversation. "We're always seeing it in my profession. For example, there

are the X's. Monsieur takes his fun where he finds it, and usually that is far from his own fireside. Meanwhile madam affords him every justification for indulging in his wandering propensity by making said fireside the least attractive place in town. What do the Scriptures say about a contentious woman and the crackling of thorns? Mrs. X must have been prophetically in the mind of whichever one of the scriptors wrote that.

"Well, they, the X's, have led a cat-and-dog life for the six or seven years of their marriage. But along comes diphtheria and smites their only child, little Dorothy X. Immediately all the good in those two persons, which has been deep buried under the ordinary routine of ordinary life, rises straight to the surface. X, the gadabout, is at home every instant he can spare from his business during Dorothy's illness and long convalescence. Mrs. X's tongue drips honey. Apart from their common devotion to the child, they become devoted to each other. Each sees the other's suffering and tries to mitigate it. During the whole of that crisis, the X family would be a perfect model for a modern Hannah Moore or Maria Edgeworth."

"And afterward?" The ex-débutante breathed it cynically, the grandmother breathed it hopefully.

"Afterward, the crisis being past, the X's revert to their ordinary manner of life, only they make it a little worse than usual. It is discouraging, but true. Of course, in all the stories, the clever author leaves the reader convinced that the conversion in character wrought by the crisis is permanent. Only the unclever author, the poor dub who has no notion of popular success, ever tells the plain, psychological or pathological—I don't know which it is—truth; that the crisis-conversion is not permanent. It's far from it! Unless you kill off the crisis-convertée, you may count

upon his relapse into precrisis character. And the backsliding is always into a deeper pit than the one from which he emerged into the fine patience or the heroism or whatever form of human nobility the emergency may have called forth. Once the tension is loosened, the drop is a long one.

"After Dorothy entirely recovered from the diphtheria, X's escape from home was, for a time, no longer a mere matter of gossip; it was a matter of scandal. And Mrs. X's nagging tongue was not merely a conjugal abomination, but the sort of thing that would have led her, in a sterner age, before a justice of the peace as a common scold. It will take them weeks to get back to their plain, old, fairly endurable cat-and-dog existence.

"As I said before, the physicians are always seeing this. I suppose the crisis of sickness and death is the most common of the opportunities granted people for patience and courage and self-sacrifice. They almost always rise to them. Slovenly servant girls in stricken households become, for the period, models of deftness and neatness. Noisy sons learn to moderate the clatter of their boots through the halls. Vain, self-centered young daughters never dream of wanting money to spend on their own adornment. Everything selfish or inconsiderate seems to disappear from the household. Its members are members of a mutual-admiration society. But, my word! What a change when the crisis is over, the tension released, and, I suppose I must in justice say, the nervous exaltation passed. It almost seems as if poor, old, imperfect human nature had to be a little worse and more imperfect than usual to make up for the brief period when it was almost inhumanly good.

"I remember," the doctor went on, warming to her theme, "some of the admirations and friendships I achieved during the ardor of the comparatively

recent suffrage campaign. I worked on committees with women and was full of delight in their qualities. They were my sisters. I would hear no word against them. No one could safely tell me that Hester L. was a gushing fool, or Marion B. a monument of dull conceit. I knew better. I knew that Hester was a lovely, ardent, affluent young thing who placed her beauty and her ardor and her income at the service of the great cause. I knew that Marion was a capable executive who gave endless time and a carefully trained ability to the same service—both things true, mind you! While we were working for the ballot, we were living for a political crisis and I had the crisis attitude. With the getting of the ballot, the crisis passed, I saw Hester as one of the wordiest fools that ever babbled, and Marion as a narrow-minded machine with an inflated sense of her own importance. I should, of course, hate to learn how they both regard me! But we're all back at normal, we who used to be fellow fighters for liberty, and we see each other with all the disillusion of every day.

"When the fiction writers really become aware of the fact that almost every one rises to an emergency, that the least of us has heroic capacities for the critical occasion, I wonder if they will cease to dot pages with exclamation marks of amazement at the way the foolish young wife takes her husband's defalcation at the bank, and the business failure's selfish children all shed their selfishness the minute failure sounds, and rally round their parent with encouragement and actual help? Of course they do it—the spendthrift young wives and the self-centered children. Not because they are exceptional human beings, mind you, but just because they're not. There is no 'story' in the heroic meeting of a great occasion. The true marvel would be in the heroic meeting of dull, daily routine.

'Were man but constant, he were perfect,' as the poet says. If he were but constant to the self evoked by crises!

"And what individuals show, the nations show, the whole world shows. Let statesmen—poor, blundering cut-throats!—manufacture a crisis, and every country rises to meet it as a man. Look at ourselves during the war. Weren't we idealists? Weren't we unselfish? Was there any task too hard for us, any sacrifice, any service? Did we mind wearing our old clothes or going without our favorite viands? Did we mind how many hours a day we worked, or with whom? Weren't we ready to embrace the whole world, with only a small portion temporarily excluded, as brothers? The crisis of war was upon us and we behaved in the perfectly typical crisis manner.

"It passed, the crisis was over, and we are all behaving as badly as possible. We have played politics with peace, we have indulged in orgies of spending for selfish, ephemeral things, while half a continent of those brethren of ours is starving. We don't embrace anybody as our brother any longer. Instead, we investigate and we deport and we talk ridiculous stuff against aliens—the aliens who were 'Americans all' such a little while ago! We won't work and we *will* be paid. Oh, we're behaving in a perfectly sickening manner! It would be an utterly disheartening manner, if we didn't have the crisis theory to carry us through it. We are running true to universal form.

"Some day," pursued the doctor dreamily, "I hope the educators will develop a new theory, a new system—one worked out on this proved principle of every normal person's ability to react magnificently to a crisis. I don't think," she mused, "that even for the sake of living always on our highest plane, we ought to demand a world in which the crisis is made perpetual. But we might demand a system of educa-

tion by which the crisis spirit should be made permanent. Think of men going into business deals with the same spirit toward their fellows that they had for their comrades when they went through barrages together! Think of women being as simply democratic to one another as they were in canteen work over there, or in war-service bureaus here, for that matter! Think of a whole nation practicing thrift in order to be kind to a sick world, as it once practiced thrift to be kind to a world at war! Think of a temperamental operatic star singing as high-heartedly for the pleasure of a simple audience as she sang to inspirit a drifting life-

boat load of her fellow creatures, after a wreck!

"The whole world could be almost paradise if people could somehow be taught always to maintain the virtues of their emergency moments! We've got the great qualities, all of us; we prove it in every crisis. Human engineers have got to get hold of it and harness it, so to speak, for everyday life—like making Niagara turn mills, you know, or putting the lightning to use in dishwashing. To use our heroic capabilities for crises only is sheer waste—and some day a pair of geniuses like Franklin and Edison will find out how to prevent it."



## THE HEART OF HIM

NO matter what happens, dearest——"

It was my husband speaking. He was leaving for a few hours at the club.

I adored hearing him say "No matter what happens, dearest——" because he always ends it with something to the effect that he loves me, had always loved me, and always would love me; that I was adorable plus, and always would be.

Breathlessly I always awaited for the message that was invariably the same, but in different words—such beautiful words!—distinctively his own.

My husband is such a dear!

I hadn't been well that day and it was so reassuring to hear him begin the remark that was always a delight to my ears.

Breathlessly I awaited the message!

My husband is such a dear!

For a minute my conscience pained because I feared I had been angry that day due to my illness.

And he is such a dear! Always reassuring me of his love, no matter what happens.

I gazed up at him, my soul in my eyes, and breathlessly awaited the message.

"No matter what happens, dearest," said my husband, "*please*—for once—don't telephone to me at the club."

The heart of him!

MARIE CANEL.



# Inarticulate Mrs. Bontonby

By Theodore Seixas Solomons

Author of "The Strong," "The Shattered Buddha," etc.

ILLUSTRATED BY VICTOR PERARD

If you've never sat in a dentist's chair, you may not understand the whole of this story—but at any rate, you'll like it. It's different.

WHEN Tommy and Vi said their usual "au revoir" that morning Vi did an unusual thing.

They had swung blithely out of Fifteenth Street into Santa Clara Avenue, walked quite circumspectly up the south side to Seventh Street, and here, where the tides of townward travel thickened, Tommy doffed his shining tile to Miss Vi and expected to see her and her mischievous smile go sailing southward down Seventh Street while he continued his dignified way along the avenue to First. But, instead, she slipped by him, headed northward.

"What's the big idea, Vi?" he asked. He was a routine person.

She smiled provokingly, one daintily shod foot poised above the crossing.

"Tommy Ulysses Stoddard, have you no eyes?"

Serious, absent-minded Tommy passed a quick, questioning hand to his forehead and found them—business as usual. Then he used them intently upon her rather diminutive person, looking first enlightened and then puzzled.

"Why, you *are* all dressed up, aren't you?" he admitted.

"Bright boy! Been looking at me since we met at the breakfast table only

an hour ago, and noticed it already. Becoming a regular Sherlock."

"I deny I've been looking at you. I've only been looking at your face."

She drew toward him from the curb and asked roguishly:

"Aren't you interested in the rest of me?"

"You know it, you little tease! Where are you going?"

"Tra la la!" She tossed him from two finger tips about the tenth of a man's sized kiss, there being no observers, brisked across the avenue, and looked not back again. Thomas U. Stoddard stared a moment and then went his way.

Whether he connected Viola's very best street clothes worn at eighty-thirty a. m. with the railroad station of Santeray is exceedingly doubtful. The observant Sherlockian mind, to which she had banteringly referred, would fairly have pounced upon it. But Stoddard's preoccupied mentality dismissed the circumstance and ushered in problem thoughts chemical, mechanical, and metallurgical.

The mind of Miss Viola Swift, on the other hand, was busy with— But she's out of sight already, and no Boswell unable to overhaul railroad trains



Her magazine was a big one, at least in size, and it admirably served the purpose of a screen from behind which she carefully observed the deportment of the handsome, white-gowned office "nurse."

could have chronicled her thoughts until two hours later, when she entered the spacious and elegant reception room of the elaborate suite of offices of H. Livingston Jones, doctor of dental surgery, in the Physicians and Surgeons' Building, San Francisco. Five waiting patients languidly raised their eyes and languidly lowered them again. Viola advanced to the polished mahogany table, carefully observed the names of the numerous fashion and funny publications piled thereon, selected one, and carried it to a piece of expensive upholstery in the corner.

Her magazine was a big one, at least in size, and it admirably served the purpose of a screen from behind which she carefully observed the people about her, the appointments of the room, and, especially, the deportment of the handsome, white-gowned office "nurse" who, when she presently appeared, smiled at Viola, and with the most distinguished manners took her name and address and assured her that Doctor Jones would be pleased to see her presently. Then she turned to one of the five with a: "Come in, Mrs. de Lancy." And she ushered her into the sanctum beyond.





At each subsequent appearance, until Viola's turn came, the smoothly coiffed, elegantly shod and perfectly manicured blonde bestowed no further intrusive glance upon the little pilgrim from Santeray—which left the latter the more free to pursue her intensive, if somewhat furtive, scrutiny of every move and gesture, every look and word of the highly trained assistant.

"Miss Swift?" purred Doctor Jones with a slight upward inflection. And he gave Viola a brief, elevated shake of

the hand, remarked upon the weather, and asked her to mount the cushion in the center of that scintillating, sanitary fixture of metal, glass, and porcelain which only a crass vulgarity could term a "chair." After ostentatiously washing his already immaculate hands, he turned to her with the politest ghost of inquiry in his eyebrows and his chiseled lips.

"I wasn't quite sure," ventured Viola, "about the condition of my mouth, and I thought I'd get expert advice—just as expert, you see, as it's possible to get."

Doctor Jones bowed ever so slightly at this none too subtle appreciation of his vogue in the metropolis of the West.

"Quite right. Safety first," he responded. "And may we have a look?"

Of course he could.

That was the very thing she was there for. But that is what the dental Chesterfield said.

He looked, aided by sundry instrumental eyes in the forms of mirrors, probes, and excavators, suggesting Lilliputian golf clubs. And while he looked, Viola also looked—at Miss Kennedy, the nurse, who, standing in a position discreet, but handy, passed the distinguished doctor of dental surgery everything he used at just the right moment. It was not easy to be both victim and undetected observer of this frisk-

ing of her oral cavity, but Viola thought she had got by.

"You have a mouth which I should call in almost perfect condition, Miss Swift," was the dentist's pronouncement. "These few fillings are all sound, and the workmanship good—very good," he testified magnanimously. "Was there anything—eh—special?"

"No-o—" admitted Viola, rising. "I was afraid of the country dentists, you see. That was all."

"Quite right. But in this case—" And he ended his sentence with a most graceful and significant flourish of the palm.

"And how much do I owe you, doctor?"

"No charge, my dear Miss Swift."

The little lady from Santeray thanked him, nodded brightly, and hurried away, leaving H. Livingston Jones and his very expert assistant facing each other quizzically. Miss Kennedy had served the noted dentist long enough to merit an occasional, though always brief, personal word.

"Odd," he ruminated. "Most extraordinarily careful young woman, that."

"Most extraordinarily *curious* young woman, I should say," returned Miss Kennedy. "She almost squirmed out of the chair to watch me!"

The nurse in the second and equally high-class dental offices where Miss Swift repeated her naive performance was even franker in her comment.

"I felt as if I had absolutely nothing on," she confessed to Doctor Caruthers, as she stood with her hand on the door, ready to admit the next patient. "Teeth nothing! She's a detective."

Miss Swift, whom the stork had delivered to parents of exactly the right name, darted down the street, sprang upon a car, and caught the 12.45 train for Santeray. There she took another car, got off at Santa Clara Avenue, walked half a block south to the newest

office building in that very thriving town of forty thousand people, took the elevator to the fifth floor, and trotted down the corridor to the offices of Thomas U. Stoddard, D.D.S. They were three in number; a reception room, an operating room marked "Private," and a laboratory. Thrusting a key into the door of the latter, Viola very quietly entered it and slipped into a small partitioned-off space, where she made a complete transformation, emerging as a dental assistant as spotlessly white as Miss Kennedy. She was dark-haired, though—not blond. And perhaps she was not so chic and elegant yet, but—

"Well, we'll see!" vowed Miss Swift determinedly, as she opened the connecting door and stood demurely before Doctor Stoddard, whose foot was upon the pedal of his drilling machine, its flexible tube draped snakily over the sleeve of his white coat, the slender buzzing fiend at the end poised wickedly in his hand.

"Back again, Miss Swift?" he asked with casual formality. But his eyes, which his patient could not see, said: "Well, where *have* you been, you dark-eyed little kitten!"

"Back again, doctor," she answered, and fell to her work.

When the patient was gone, Doctor Stoddard turned to his assistant with mock gravity. "Child of mystery, where *have* you been?"

"Oh, man of little faith, I've been visiting the *crème de la crème* of the 'profesh'—the dental cream, as it were, of Frisco."

"But there's nothing the matter with your ivories. Haven't I kept them as pretty as the mouth they're in?" The big, serious boy looked hurt.

Viola laughed gayly and touched his sleeve.

"And particularly their young women assistants." The enterprising expression he knew so well flew into the

small, dark face, as she went on: "If we're going to get the paying class of work, we've simply got to get right up to date. Of course, we could ape the best of them here in Santeray, like Doctor Dimrock and Doctor Curzeley, but why not go ahead of them? We can be just as swell as the swellest in the big city, if we gradually work into it."

"Gee, ain't we swell enough already, with the best offices in Santeray? They certainly put a crimp in the check book when the agent of the building comes around. And the equipment—look at it!" And Tommy waved his hand about the operating room.

It was, in truth, as complete an inquisitorial den as the devilish ingenuity of dental science could make it. No device calculated to wring groans from the intrepid was missing. The pincers, the bowstring, the rack, the thumbscrew—every hideous tool of torture of the Dark Ages, at sight of which poor wretches shrank and gibbered, was represented here in modern instruments of anguish of so exquisite a diabolism that their ancient prototypes seemed mere mild correctives, fit only for the nursery. Old Torquemada's cruel face would have lighted with unholy rapture could he have come up and inspected this chamber of horrors. Why, in one instrument drawer of Tommy's cabinet there was enough potential misery to have driven all medieval Europe to hara-kiri!

The young dentist's prideful gesture was eloquent.

"If any member of the élite of Santeray wants more than this," it said, "he must hate himself, indeed!"

"Oh, we're all right here, Tommy. There's nothing missing. It's my part that's been troubling me lately. I wanted to see just how those up-to-the-minute nurses handled themselves. I've got lots of notes."

She darted to the laboratory and pro-

duced a tiny memorandum book in which she had jotted a surprising number of "Do's" and "Don'ts" for the white-gowned of the profession. She reeled these off to much amused Tommy, who noticed that they ran the entire gamut—movements, gestures, speech, intonation, expression, and costume and grooming from the amber comb to the pointed toe.

"And there are suggestions for you, too, Tommy, and dope on customs, fixtures, furniture, and literature which I haven't digested yet."

"Whew!" said Thomas Ulysses, a trace of perspiration showing on his nice, homely face. He would have voiced a mild protest had not the telephone rang.

"Yes," he answered it. "Doctor Stoddard speaking. Oh, Dr. Curzeley. How are you, doctor?" He tried to dissemble his surprise. "A complete upper set—probably a gold plate? And very particular, you say? Oh, thank you, doctor. This afternoon? Just a moment; I'll see. Miss Swift, will it be possible to make an examination at three-thirty?"

Viola glanced at the open diary on the little table and came to Doctor Stoddard's aid. "I think we can manage to sandwich him in, doctor," she answered in none too low a voice.

"Yes, I think so, doctor. We'll manage it. Thank you; I sure appreciate it very much." He hung up and turned to Viola, his eyes alight.

"You'll have a chance to practice your up-to-the-minute manners this afternoon. Ahem!" He cleared his throat for the auspicious announcement. "Mrs. H. Jenkyn Bontonby is coming. You've seen her name frequently, haven't you? I'm sure I have."

"Oh, that's Virginia Crisley Bontonby, the society woman, who's always getting up things for patriotic and philanthropic appeals. Why, the *Mercury* runs a cut of her distinguished jib

next to the comic section about every other Sunday. But Doctor Curzeley! Who'd have thought it?"

"Very decent of him, I'm sure," returned Stoddard. "Say's he's dated up quite a bit ahead and she's in a hurry. Told her I was young, but an A-1 plate man. In fact, trained in his office. Of course, that was an invincible argument." He laughed good-humoredly.

Viola knew that it was precisely because Curzeley was so conspicuously poor a workman in the making of artificial teeth, that he had so bitterly resented young Stoddard's leaving him two years before to set up for himself. In fact, there had been little or no communication between them since.

Stoddard had been an industrious young fellow of humble horticultural antecedents, who had gone through dental college on his wages as foreman of a big apricot orchard. He assured the Swifts that learning to bud, prune, and graft was an excellent predental course. And Viola's father, who had poor teeth and a small income, grimly appreciated the point.

Hard work and good work had given Stoddard a living and a constantly growing practice. But overattention to the technical side of his profession and underattention to the credit and collection end of it, had held him back until the shrewd daughter of his landlady, electing herself his business manager, took him under her affectionately protecting wing. Then things moved; the dental outfit, to begin with—to better quarters. And patients passed under her appraising, worldly young eyes before they ran up bills which Stoddard could ill afford to lose. Most of the mounting monthly surplus had then gone into implements, furniture, fittings, surgical journals, up-to-date appliances. And the process was still going on, though Tommy Stoddard would rather have set aside more of it for—well, quite a different purpose! In fact, lately he had.

Or rather *they* had. Alas, it was as yet too little!

"Oh, that's great!" congratulated Viola. "She must have hosts of wealthy and influential friends. And once her teeth fall into your capable hands——"

"Goodness, child, do you expect them to descend in showers?"

"Indeed they might, if she's been Curzeley's patient. The pompous old fraud! Anyhow, she's bound to be pleased with you, Tommy. And who knows what may be the result?"

On the subject of her employer's skill, especially in the making of plates and bridges, Viola was little less than a fanatic. In her enthusiasm she had even averred that the young dentist's imitations were superior to the genuine, and that Nature herself should have provided children with Tommy's artificial teeth!

Half an hour late, as befitted a fashionable caller, Mrs. H. Jenkyn Bontonby stepped smartly into the reception room. "Thank Goodness," thought Viola, as she opened the inner door to greet her, "there are other patients, and they're prosperous looking, too." Mrs. Bontonby was imposingly tall, condescendingly gracious, and about forty-five. Miss Swift approached her with a smile.

"Is Doctor Stoddard in?" asked the lady affably. She was ever affable to her "inferiors." "I think he expects me—Mrs. Bontonby."

Viola nodded brightly and carried the message within.

"Tell her to step in," said Tommy, who had dismissed his last patient ten minutes before and had been dissuaded by his assistant from immediately calling another.

"Nothing doing," vetoed Viola. "It's better to have her wait—just a little."

Stoddard gave her a grave, military salute. He had unbounded confidence in her as a strategist. She returned to the reception room.



Two very strenuous weeks followed for Doctor Stoddard and his peppery little assistant.

"Doctor Stoddard will see you in just a few moments," she said in her best manner, as influenced—as the art critics say—by Kennedy. Only influenced, for Vi was no parrot. Returning, she made several suggestions in the politic interlude she had contrived. "Give her a high shake—two stiff little wiggles. 'Very pleased, indeed, Mrs. Bontonby,' you say, as if three-quarters of your—ahem!—clientele, are Sunday pictures. Treat her kindly, but without enthusiasm, and—soak her!"

"Soak her? Why, you gouging little pig, you!"

"Oh, Tommy, you're so stupid! You know perfectly well that what you'd call soaking her would be considerably less than Curzeley or Dimrock would charge her and never bat an eye. She'll be afraid of your work if you don't. And I'm not a pig. You know I never say a word when you charge small-salaried patients almost nothing. Mrs. H. Jenkyn Bontonby must be worth all kinds of money. She certainly ought to be—the people she trains with. You're a dental genius—plates especially—and the world has got to know it and pay for it."



Big Doctor Stoddard looked gravely down on his concentrated essence of office management and winked. Then he formally directed her to call in Mrs. Bontonby. That meant she was banished to the laboratory. For that most delicate matter—"And how much will it cost?" was here, as in all well-regulated offices, held sacred to the two parties directly concerned. The next twenty minutes, therefore, were anxious ones for Viola, unable now to guide her dental hero by so much as a nudge in the ribs. But she didn't really worry. A hint to Tommy, if he approved it, had always been enough. If he didn't, even a gentle little kick would be unavailing. And she was sure, from Tommy's wink, that he approved.

Nevertheless, she "nearly died" of curiosity before she learned the result.

Doctor Stoddard negotiated the manual greeting cleverly, manipulation of any kind being his specialty. And to do him justice, he continued to "handle" Mrs. Bontonby in this preliminary bout in an easy, natural manner in which the lady could discern no trace of that awe with which she had rightfully expected the young practitioner to be filled. This was her line of patter:

"So good of you to see me at once! I knew you would, after what Doctor Curzeley said of you. In quite the most flattering way, I assure you, and aside from your professional skill, of which he also spoke in the highest terms. So absolutely driven, poor Doctor Curzeley—work he simply *couldn't* put aside, even for me. Well," she philosophized, "the young men must have a chance to show what they can do. And you know, perhaps"—modest rising inflection—"of my constant efforts for the young folks. And, by the way, the Venomous Club, of which I have the honor to be president, is getting up a very helpful little affair for the end of May. And I'm so anxious to be fit and fine by that time. Of course, I couldn't make a

public announcement of what *your* part had been"—Mrs. Bontonby used her fine eyes most effectively in this droll suggestion—"but to my intimates, my very intimates, among whom, as of course you are aware, are very highly desirable prospective patients, I shall be only too glad, you know——" Her sentence ended in a most significant genuflection, a wordless climax very eloquent of gain for this new object of her benevolence.

"Very kind, indeed," murmured Tommy. "Open wide."

"Well?" asked Viola breathlessly a little later.

Tommy smiled. "Shall I tell you now?" he offered.

Viola's strong will wavered. But—business first.

"Those three patients out there are horribly impatient. About four words."

"All right, I guess," reported Tommy with the requisite brevity.

At five sharp, Doctor Stoddard, having disposed in turn of his several remaining patients, with little chance between for conversation with his nurse, changed his coat, seized his hat, and disappeared. Between one and a half and two minutes later—an interval sufficient for the return of the elevator—Miss Viola Swift also left the building, and by a route different and shorter by perhaps two minutes than that taken by Doctor Stoddard, met that young gentleman at the good old corner of Seventh and Santa Clara, and, both of them, now homeward bound, engaged in a conversation delightfully free from the restraints of an office. For from this meeting point onward, the avenue was mainly a residential thoroughfare, and it was unlikely that any of its non-descript pedestrians would chance to know them and hence to question the propriety of a rising young dental surgeon being on terms of such intimacy with his office nurse.

"Oh, yes, it's a whale of a job, all right!" admitted Tommy. "Biggest I've ever had, of course. The upper plate's only half of it. In her lower there are several crowns, one three-tooth bridge, and numerous fillings—enamel inlays, at that—in the anterior gum margins of all her incisors. And though she raised her eyebrows at the estimates, I'm sure that was for effect."

"You're improving, Tommy," murmured Vi appreciatively.

"For she acquiesced readily enough, after a discreet pause. Just the same, it worries me a little. She wants an all-gold plate, and the best of everything elsewhere. Gee, the gold and platinum alone will set us back a hundred dollars easily. Hope it won't spoil that little excursion of ours!"

And he found her hand and gave it a tender little squeeze. She answered the pressure and was silent for a moment.

"It'll be worse than that, Tommy, dear. She'll take at least half your time, doing a hurry-up job like that, and you'll lose a lot of business that's cash or as good as cash. Here it is almost the middle of May and we want to be off next month."

"Cause *we* want to be a June bride, don't we, Vi?" he teased.

"One of us does," confessed Viola. The little brunette's blushing was delightfully intensive, like everything else she did.

"Well, general manager, what can we do about it?"

Vi frowned ponderingly.

"Tommy, she just ought to pay cash—part at least." She looked anxiously into his face. And well she might! Highly "professional" Thomas U. Stoddard hated it, shrank from it. Collecting at all was a *bête noire*, while collecting immediately—C. O. D. dentistry, as he called it—was possible to him only when some zealous patient metaphorically knocked him down and shoved a bill up his trouser leg.

"You'd hardly call it good policy, would you, Vi?" he gasped.

She agreed it was a debatable question, and they discussed it pro and con all the long way to the Swift place. He conceded that payment terms were stricter now, and that the stranger and the person of doubtful responsibility were usually expected to pay cash. But Virginia Cresley Bontonby, of established social position, turned over to him by another practitioner of the highest repute—it would be an ill-requited courtesy if he treated her as an irresponsible stranger. But, aside from that, she was an opening wedge to the sort of practice Viola had made him see was their logical goal.

"Oh, she's bound to speak well of you, anyhow," countered Viola, "when she feels that perfect Stoddard fit, with its fierce, carnivorous biting power. Why, she could hardly talk to-day. You know what Harrison, of the collection agency, says of so many of the apparently rich—how much trouble they have with such accounts? Make her pay at the conclusion of the work, Tommy. Tell her it's a peculiar job—so much precious metal to be bought. I know it'll be hard, Tommy, but you simply can't afford to wait for months."

"Oh, I guess I can arrange it in some way," concluded Stoddard amiably, though his neumagastric nerve went flat in him. Hand in hand they passed through the garden gate.

It took Tommy Ulysses Stoddard the greater part of Mrs. Bontonby's first sitting to plan his attack and reinflate his neumagastric tire. But he finally went over the top with a dashing gallantry which Viola ought really to have seen. Viola was busy in the other room with a gentleman with a swollen jowl.

He got his chance when Mrs. Bontonby insisted on a definite date for the finishing of the work. She simply *must* know. To which the dentist demurred



that this would require a great deal of readjusting of his other engagements and disappointments to many patients. And, by the way, there was a large cash outlay involved in her work, so that on the whole he presumed she would not mind making payment on the completion of the work.

He would have mentioned a half or even a third of the entire amount, but Mrs. Bontonby, after one flashing glance—he remembered it later—smiled and waved her jeweled hand in token of entire acquiescence. So he let it go at that, inwardly congratulated himself, and felt a boyish impatience to tell Vi.

Two very strenuous weeks followed for Doctor Stoddard and his peppery little assistant. First he gassed her—with Viola manning the pumps—and with his forceps cleared her upper deck for action. Cows know this state habitually, but Mrs. Bontonby was quite unused to it, though she had been in precisely the same predicament at the beginning of life. And now, as then, she was speechless—almost. It hadn't mattered then, for Virginia, the infant, had had no clubs to direct. But now, plucked of her chief personal adornment, Mrs. Bontonby remained for several hours incomunicado—in the reception room, while Doctor Stoddard riveted a few side teeth on the small plate she had worn, and made a temporary plate of it, so that she could eat and talk, after a fashion.

Later he got an impression of her mouth—a plaster one, that is, which he rescued while she was wildly endeavoring to swallow it, and turned the lady loose upon a chatty world. It was very exasperating to a woman whose chief social potencies were derived from a clear, forceful, and elegant enunciation. For her temporary teeth permitted only a limited and uncertain converse on her part, and she remained perforce in semiretirement and was able to devote almost her entire time to badgering pa-

tient and perspiring Doctor Stoddard. The rest of her energies she devoted to the coming reception of the Venomous Club, whose symbolic seal was a circular serpent with fangs fastened in its own tail.

This function, at which the famous Hindu, Swami Somethingorother—name fictitious, but easier pronounced than the real—would be passed around with other chocolate cake, was to take place at Madame President Bontonby's own house and grounds. Being an elaborate and exclusive affair, it required a good deal of conferring, and it was, of course, out of the question for Mrs. Bontonby to have personal intercourse with her social equals and others in the undignified state she was in. But she was able to use the telephone with absolute impunity, and hence in her nightly orisons were all Mr. Edison's virtues "remembered."

True, the telephone could carry her oral sounds with little of their wonted phonetic exactitude. Her r's staggered beheadedly over the wires, and that hiss in the receiver was really Mrs. Bontonby's misbegottens launched "half made up" from one mouthpiece to the other. But the mangled speech was imputed by the lady or gentleman at the other end to "the miserable phone service we are getting now." And Mrs. Bontonby went steadily forward with her preparations for the little affair of the thirty-first of May, while Stoddard struggled to complete his task on or before that fateful day.

It played havoc with his practice, and he worked nights and both Sundays. But the goal was four hundred and eighty-five dollars in cash, and—he hoped—a commendatory word here and there among the élite of Santeray.

Mrs. Bontonby had suggested camouflage, and he hastened to assure her that in the matter of false teeth—he begged her pardon, artificial teeth—dental ethics not only countenanced, but encour-

aged it. And could he do it? Well, *could he!* Squarely upright, bluntly honest Tommy Stoddard, in fashioning teeth was just a regular wily devil. "Artificial" wasn't the word for them, though he had called them that because she had shuddered at "false." But false was right—falsely natural. His cunning at it was Machiavellian.

One tooth he made a little irregular. Another a shade out of alignment. Two others showed small fillings. And on the evening of the twenty-ninth, before he fastened the last tooth to its delicate gold arch, he ground it so that it showed years and years of wear! It was the final touch in a triumph of artistic skill. It was a dental masterpiece.

There were two fittings on the afternoon of the thirtieth, when he had hoped to deliver this beautiful and costly pet to its future mistress. But a trifling adjustment had to be made, and for this purpose she came at ten the next morning, and again at twelve. He slipped the glittering thing into place. She bit this way; she snapped that. She said "ah," and "yes, indeed" with succulent grimaces—at the hand mirror. It felt a little strange, of course—pets do, at first— But—yes, it was entirely comfortable; it liked its new home.

A few last moments of grinding for pluperfect articulation—he had had her bite into carbon paper at least one hundred and fifty times—and Doctor Thomas Ulysses Stoddard was satisfied. He told her nothing remained but a thorough repolishing of the entire creation—the plate, not the universe—and to return in half an hour and take it away with her.

"I could promise it 'all wrapped and ready,'" he said gayly, "but you'll be able to wrap it up better than I could."

And she gave him an appreciative little leer, got into her hat and coat, and descended to her car.

Viola was eating her sandwiches in

the laboratory when Tommy entered with the plate in his hand. While he turned and twisted it on the revolving burnisher, they chatted blithely.

"Here it is, Vi, all ready for her when she comes in about one-thirty. Give it another rinsing and set it in place. Not a bad sort of woman, I guess. I'm hungry as a bear, so au revoir, little pet!"

At one-twenty-five Mrs. Bontonby entered. Miss Swift smiled her into the chair, removed the ill-fitting, crude little rubber makeshift through which, however, Mrs. Bontonby had managed to worry a great many florists, Japanese lantern dealers, a caterer or two, and innumerable others, and deftly inserted the lustrous white-and-gold objet d'art into the lady's aristocratic face.

And Mrs. Bontonby, baring both upper and lower fangs in one tigerish glare at the hand mirror, grunted her satisfaction, glanced hastily at her wrist, murmured, "My, so late! Good-by, dearie," and was off!

Viola would have said, or thought she would have said, at least she was sure that if Mrs. Bontonby had tarried as much as two minutes she most certainly *would* have said: "Haven't you forgotten something?" But Virginia Crisley Bontonby had tarried not at all. She "stood not upon the order of her going." She simply went.

Surely it wasn't because Doctor Stoddard was out at lunch. She knew—who didn't?—that one of the duties of a doctor's assistant is to receive money and give receipts. Viola's anxious reflections were interrupted by the sound of the outer door. It was elderly Mr. Harrison, solicitor for the Santeray Collection Agency. They were great friends. Between them they had done much for the profit-and-loss account of the modest ledger of T. U. Stoddard, D. D. S.

"How are the tough ones this month, Miss Swift?" he asked pleasantly.



Viola deftly plucked the new plate from its perfect suction.

Quickly she found the bill, made out two days ago, of Mrs. H. Jenkyn Bontonby for four hundred and eighty-five dollars, and showed it to him.

"This is what's worrying me. The material alone cost Doctor Stoddard a great deal. She was to pay it when the work was done. It's done, and she's just flounced out of the office this minute."

"Like a bat out of Hades?" supplied Harrison appreciatively.

"Exactly," confirmed Viola, smiling mirthlessly. "I know they're swell people and all that, but why did she—"

Harrison's experienced eye was on the neat little slip of a bill.

"Don't blame you in the least for your fears," he observed dryly. "We've had these Bontonbys on our lists a number of times. In fact, if I'm not mistaken—" He consulted a very con-

densed little leather book which he took from his pocket. "Yes, they owe a number of our clients now. There was a suit—no, a suit was threatened—some months ago. There's a doctor's bill. This is our private mark for physician. And—this is confidential, of course, Miss Swift—she owes a dental bill, also."

"Who to?" asked Viola with a sudden breathless suspicion.

"Doctor Curzeley."

"Oh!" she exclaimed. "That accounts for it!"

"For what?"

"For his recommending her to us."

"He did, did he?" Harrison's eye twinkled. "Why, what did he have against you folks?"

Viola swallowed hard. "They're high-toned—

swells—names in society columns—charities, culture, art."

"Oh, yes," agreed Harrison in a blasé way. "And they manage somehow to keep out of the courts. Probably because they're execution proof. They belong to a class that have good incomes, but inveterately spend more than they make. Like to spend on their friends, and for personal advertising. They're kind to florists, but mere butchers bore them. Tradespeople, though, they often pay or compromise with—they have to—after they've been sent bills for months running. But doctors and dentists—never! Sorry, Miss Swift, but we can't promise much with an account like hers. We'll take it, of course, but we'd really prefer not to."

Left to herself, Viola pressed her hand to her forehead. Poor, hard-working, conscientious Doctor Stod-

dart! How happily he had held her only last night, while they planned their wedding trip. And now? How bitterly he was to be disappointed! And it was the misgrown fruit of the policy to which she herself had persuaded him—to try for a fashionable practice.

A hot wave of anger swept her. But she checked it and bit her lip and pondered. What could she do? A sudden thought came to her, a demeaning thought, but her dark eyes lit with it. It was the sort of thing that she, a proud young woman, scorned, but for the doctor's sake she'd do it. Surely people *couldn't* be so heartless, so vile as to—

She scrawled a little note for Tommy—"Gone to Mrs. Bontonby's. Pack soon"—changed her clothes in a jiffy, and caught the elevator.

She knew where the vanishing lady lived, for curiosity had made her seek the location a week before. From across the handsome residential street she had viewed the house and spacious grounds of H. Jenkyn Bontonby.

When she reached the place now, she saw at once that an occasion of some sort was in preparation. The delivery autos of several dealers were parked around the corner. A number of men were about the grounds, far back, where a rustic pavilion could be seen.

Viola crossed the lawn, ascended the steps, pressed the button, and asked if she might see Mrs. Bontonby. The man took her name and ushered her into a pretentiously furnished reception room where she waited nervously.

Mrs. Bontonby promptly appeared and, though never losing the measured tread which comported with her majestic bearing, moved quickly across the Persian rugs. It was a very busy afternoon with her. In an hour her guests would arrive. She paused within five feet of Viola, raised her head a little,

and elevated her eyebrows in haughty interrogation—interrogation not alone of the eyes, cold and unsmiling, nor of the face, studiously expressive of shocked surprise, but of the body as well, posed at a little distance, as if to be safely out of reach of the hand that a mere doctor's assistant might proffer to Virginia Crisley Bontonby. It didn't seem possible that the two women had almost lived in the same offices for fourteen consecutive days!

The whole figure said: "To what preposterous, unimaginable errand do I owe the impertinence of this intrusion, here in my private residence?"

But intuitive little Viola read more. Through the thin veneer of conventional courtesy which had brought Mrs. Bontonby to the reception room and held her a moment till she could dispose of the intruder, the brown eyes pierced to the woman beneath—cold, hard, selfish, cruel. Viola had come to ask—almost to plead, if necessary. But instant realization came to her of the futility of such a course, of its utter hopelessness. And, her heart pounding to her finger tips, she changed her plan.

"Oh, Mrs. Bontonby," she began, and the quiet naturalness of her voice amazed and encouraged her, "I'm *so* sorry! It was *so* stupid of me!" She advanced confidently to the tall woman.

"Indeed," said Mrs. Bontonby, her affected surprise now genuine. "Why, what's the matter?"

"I suppose it's easily remedied," went on Viola. "I hope—" Her raised hand had already taken possession of the lady's chin. "Open wide," she purred in the best professional manner.

Those three syllables had saturated Mrs. Bontonby's brain cells for two weeks, and almost automatically she obeyed. With left thumb and forefinger straddling the wide upper lip, Viola deftly plucked the new plate from its perfect suction and drew it carefully to the outer air.

She gave it one look of well-feigned horror and wrapped it quickly in a clean handkerchief. "I thought so," she murmured cryptically, as she turned away.

"Wath all thith?" demanded Mrs. Bontonby in consternation, following Viola toward the door. Her upper lip sagged flabbily, but her other features stiffened in rising wrath. "Mith Zwif, whadth thith mean!"

"Don't be alarmed," soothed Viola, opening the front door. "*Something important has been forgotten*, that's all! Come down to the office any time."

"Bud Mith Zwif, I inzhith——"

"And it can easily be fixed up," finished Miss "Zwif," eluding the detaining arm of the half-frantic woman. Mrs. Bontonby had given her a lesson in the gentle art of beating it, and Viola was an apt pupil. With a quick little nod she pattered down the steps and toward the sidewalk.

Mrs. Bontonby's dignity held her in the doorway frozen—all but her eyes, that is, which would have burned peep-holes in an asbestos curtain, and her hands, which were engaged in imaginatively strangling the little office nurse. She also tried to gnash her teeth—but they were in Viola's pocket and, naturally, she failed. Nothing prevented the gnashing of her wits, however, with the result that she presently sprang into action.

When Viola reached the office, her sparkling eyes and flushed cheeks told Stoddard that something very unusual had occurred. But that mysterious note had prepared him for it, whatever it was. He asked the present incumbent of the dental chair to take a seat in the reception room for a moment, and turned to the girl with quizzical expectancy.

Viola, whipping stilletos from her hat, jerkily explained:

"Mrs. Bontonby came—she engulfed

the plate—she licked her chops a moment—and then she flew. Not a word! Not "thank you" or "darn you" or "I'll send you a check." Just, presto! The room is empty! Then Robinson called, and I asked his opinion. He knows all about her—her and her 'class' of fashionable dead beats! He's got several accounts against her, and among them—what do you think? An old bill of Curzeley's."

"Curzeley's!"

"Yes, dear Doctor Curzeley, who forgave you so much that he sicked her on to you for this horribly expensive job!"

"The—dickens!"

"I felt kind of guilty for letting her get away without paying, but I couldn't very well have refused to put the plate into her mouth until she put the money into my hand."

"And you went up to her house?"

"Yes, intending to ask her politely—oh, very politely—to pay you."

"And you did?"

"No! Her manner was an insult. She raised her eyebrows at my mere presence in her house, my very audacity to pass its sacred portals. So—here it is, Tommy." Viola unwrapped the plate and held it up.

"Her teeth!" cried Stoddard, aghast.

"Her teeth?" repeated Viola coldly.

"I doubt it. They're either yours or hers—I'm no lawyer, Tommy."

He stared at the plate with fascinated horror.

"She gave it back?"

"Um—well, not exactly. I—extracted it back, as you might say. Sort of helped myself to it."

"You snatched her teeth out of her mouth? Why, Viola Allen Swift?" Tommy sank into his own operating chair.

For a moment they gazed into each other's eyes soberly, almost frightenedly. Then they broke down. It was too much.



"Shush," said Vi, after their first uncontrollable paroxysm. She made warning gestures toward the reception room. By a common impulse they fled to the laboratory, held their sides, further relieved their feelings, and wiped their eyes.

"What'll we do?" asked Tommy helplessly.

"Leave it to me," said Vi, a wicked light returning.

"I can't," asserted Tommy. Then he stood up. "And I won't. Gol-darn her, you did right! Cash on delivery; it was distinctly understood. Hullo!"

The door opened and the entrance framed an apparition—of Lady Macbeth, it seemed. But it was Lady Bontonby who, thanks to her twin-six, had visited a number of places, and yet was not far behind Viola. She had stalked into the reception room, which she swept with her eagle's glance; stalked into the operating room, where her queenly rage had overlooked her own teeth lying on the swinging tray; and stalked on to the laboratory. She searched the face of Doctor Stoddard, then of Miss Swift, and back to Doctor Stoddard.

Tommy braced himself for a shock. He had been a worm, but the worm had turned. In defense of Viola, he was ready figuratively or actually to go to the mat with this smoldering, amazonian volcano—and she looked as if it was going to be actual. She backed into the operating room, and the dentist and his assistant followed her.

Pride is a funny thing. Every once in a while, as man careens down the ages, somebody notices that. Virginia Crisley Bontonby was not too proud to cheat a crippled peddler, though the lives of his starving babies might depend upon her paying him. But she was too proud to hear the truth about herself. She simply couldn't stand it. She would rather have perished!

She believed she might avoid hear-

ing it from meek and kindly young Stoddard, even if she didn't fork over the currency and check—certified—which she carried in her hand bag. But she was far less sure of Miss Swift. She had an acute hunch that from that intensive little person she might learn strikingly original and highly ornamental ways of saying what she already knew, and her proud and haughty spirit could not brook the ignominy of it. No, she couldn't take the chance, and the only sure way was to pay—and run a bluff.

"Ha' you fixth th' plath, Dother Stoddth?" she asked in a dulcet voice. Soft, innocent words were easy—easy to select, that is—not to pronounce. But the dulcet voice? When you are really raging! That was Mrs. Bontonby's life's achievement. She knew if they kept their faces straight and humored her bluff, all would be well. If they laughed at her articulation—well, the game was up. She could only tear them limb from limb and go home to bed.

"Why—eh, yes, Mrs. Bontonby," said, Doctor Stoddard, frowning slightly, the better to preserve his gravity. "As a matter of fact, there was nothing—"

Of course she couldn't let him finish.

"Quite a cointhidenth—I forgoth thomthig, too," she interrupted with a "You-couldnt-possibly - guess - what" air.

"Oh, did you?" said Stoddard with a trace, a mere trace, of sarcasm in his politely interested tone.

"Yeth," she assured him. And she handed over the equivalent of four hundred and seventy-five dollars.

"Thank you," he said noncommittally. He would not join in her game. But neither would he "call" her. Then he handed her the plate, which she whisked into her mouth with all the ardor of a hungry canine. Seated snugly under its pink dome, it brought

back to her, along with her power of precise and sonorous articulation, that personal dignity and self-respect which which had been so hard to maintain. She used them all in asking a question which she passionately hoped would be the last she would ever address to these youthful miscreants.

Her hand on the doorknob, her head held high, she queried with frigid calm:

"Might I ask whether it was you or your as-ssistant here whom I have to thank for remembering this *most* important detail?"

Viola would have spoken, but Tommy gave her no chance.

"I take entire responsibility, Mrs. Bontonby, for any services rendered by Miss Swift."

She fastened them each in turn with

a glare of sinister and bloodcurdling malevolence—and *smiled!*

"Oh, indeed! Well, good-by."

"And where has the tigress tamer decided she'd like to go next week, when she's Mrs. T. U. Stoddard?" asked Tommy a little later.

"Well, where do you suppose the Bontonbys go?" queried Viola with apparent irrelevance.

"Heavens, child, do you want to follow that woman around?"

"On the contrary, I don't want her to follow *me* around. I am anxious to be where she is not. So she can't swim up behind me when I'm in the surf, or sneak up on me when I'm admiring the view from the edge of a precipice. Tommy, *I saw it in her eyes!*"



## THE PRODIGAL

I WALKED so long the cities' ways,  
I trod so oft the pavement's heat,  
I had forgotten that the maze  
Of forest paths could be so sweet,  
Or just how soft, green meadows feel  
At daybreak underneath one's feet.

I lived so long amid the crowds—  
The din, the tumult of the mart—  
I had forgotten that the clouds  
Above the maples look a part  
Of earth, or how the warm rain shrouds  
Old buildings with transforming art.

I missed so many years the sweet,  
The simple things of life, that now,  
Though I have come with tardy feet,  
They will not welcome me, somehow,  
But turn and flee as if they saw  
The mark of "Alien" on my brow.

L. M. THORNTON.





# The Silver Lady

By Arthur Tuckerman

Author of "The Hand of Ming," "The Kid Pilot," etc.

ILLUSTRATED BY MARSHALL FRANTZ

**That tragic first affair at eighteen, with a twist that makes it new, told by a promising young writer whose work already has charm and distinction.**

UPON the morning of his eighteenth birthday, Christophe suddenly gave expression to his views on womankind. This was the first inkling uncle Vauclain ever had that his nephew was giving the sex even momentary consideration.

"I think," Christophe said with a kind of passionate eagerness in his voice, "that all women are very wonderful creatures. The average man is not worthy to touch the hems of their skirts."

They were sitting together on a stone bench in the garden of the Villa Isis, where uncle and nephew had sat from nine until noon every morning for the past six years, except Sundays, when they attended service in the little Catholic chapel in the village. Upon this bench uncle Vauclain had imparted to Christophe a most wonderful education—an education derived from the lessons of life, such as is not learned in the classroom. Uncle Vauclain was—or, rather, had been—a man of the world, widely traveled, widely read. He knew men.

For nearly ten years these two had lived at the Villa Isis, ever since Christophe's beautiful Parisian mother had left his father to go to another man, who owned a great palace on the Avenue du Bois and who could lavish on her the pearls, the limousines, and all the other trifles that to her made life worth while. Her tinsel heart cried out for things which Christophe's fa-

ther, a mediocre artist living with his family in a dreary set of rooms not far from the Luxembourg Gardens, had not been able to give her. Nor had he ever guessed that she craved them.

A poor, temperamental creature, steeped in a curious idealism of his own fabrication, Christophe's father had lingered for a few months in the débris of his shattered world, and then had thrown himself into the Seine.

Of all this Christophe knew next to nothing. He had a vague idea that both his parents had died when he was very young. A year or two after the tragedy, uncle Vauclain had adopted Christophe and taken him to Egypt. Uncle Vauclain held the position of French consul in the Nile town of Beni-Su, some four hundred miles south of Cairo. Here, in the Villa Isis, a square, white-walled house modestly retiring behind a thick cluster of feathery palms at the river's edge, Christophe had grown up.

Somewhat disturbed at his nephew's drastic generalization on womenkind, uncle Vauclain put a friendly arm about Christophe's lean shoulders.

"I had flattered myself," he remarked with a slightly cynical curve of his thin lips, "that I had given you a fairly good education, but I can see already that in some respects it is sadly lacking. If you start out for Paris and the Beaux Arts next month with those views, *mon cher*, you will soon get a very horrid awakening."

Christophe stared at him through half-closed, lazy brown eyes. Impatiently he brushed a lock of his long, black hair from his brow.

"But why, uncle? Surely you wish me to have some ideals. You gave me the education of an idealist, didn't you?"

This was perfectly true, and uncle Vauclain knew it, although he had hardly realized the fact before. He cupped his hands about his brown, wrinkled face, elbows resting on his thin knees, and gazed thoughtfully through the break in the wall at the foot of the sloping garden where he could see the Nile drifting lazily by.

To the north, the river curved slightly in its course through pale-green fields, and eventually disappeared from view behind a cliff of red basaltic rock. To old Vauclain that bend in the river was symbolic, for beyond it lay the roaring maelstrom of man-made civilization, with all its mingled joys and sorrows, its victories and defeats. In Beni-Su one found life neutralized; every day was the same. One measured time only by a calendar, and not by events.

He turned to his nephew with a smile.

"Come. We are getting much too serious. We will go down to the Ramesses Hall. I have a small sketch to finish."

Christophe rose to his full height, very tall and slender and very young. Something was on his mind. After a moment he spoke, diffidently.

"There is to be a dance at the great hotel beyond the river bend to-night. I have never been inside the place, out of respect for your own wishes. Don't you think that to-night—my eighteenth birthday—we might go there for a while, you and I?"

The old man became apologetic. He even stammered slightly.

"Of course, of course! I had no idea you wanted to go. I had my reasons, Christophe, until you became grown. The people one meets there are

not always of the best—a reckless, pleasure-seeking crowd, princes and rogues, good and bad from every corner of the world. Egypt is their winter playground. But we shall go, you and I, and you shall see how they are."

Together they strode beneath the white archway of the Nile wall, all but hidden in a dress of blood-red bougainvillæa. At the gate, Hassan, the servant, greeted them with a smile which showed his ivory teeth and furtively hid within the folds of his blue galabeah the stick of sugar cane he had been chewing.

Below the raised pathway, a broad-beamed native felucca, with chocolate-colored lateen sails, was grounding heavily on the strip of sandy shore, disgorging its load of natives from the villages of the Thebian plain. It was market day at Beni-Su, and each carried a basket laden with produce.

Vauclain and his nephew strolled down the sloping path toward the white cubes and domes of the village half a mile away. The old man continued to talk; he seemed to be trying to justify the education he had given the boy. To Christophe the education needed no such justification, for he had known nothing different and he was perfectly satisfied. He was unable to make comparisons.

"I had wished," droned Vauclain, "to make you different from the rest. My nephew was to go into the world a fine, noble, and pure man, and yet he was to know instinctively how to avoid the pitfalls which claimed the weak."

He stopped short with the realization that perhaps he had failed. Christophe had come up to his expectations, but he was not equipped to face the darker things of life. He never dreamed the story of his mother; such things did not occur to him. An intense, overwhelming fear gripped at Vauclain's heart. Christophe would set out alone for Paris in a month's time to pursue his

studies at the Beaux Arts. He would arrive in the great city of light and laughter very young and very ignorant—and worse, a little bit too sure of himself in the folly of his own ignorance.

Vague recollections began to filter through Vauclain's mind of his own youth, of certain episodes he had passed through unscathed, of certain friends who had fallen by the way.

angry now. "Pouf! You have known but two in your life. One was too young to be bad and the other too old!"

"I think," said Christophe shortly, "that that is a disgusting thought!"



"Women," he said very gently to his nephew, "are like men in one way; there are both kinds, good and bad."

"Women," he said very gently to his nephew, "are like men in one way; there are both kinds, good and bad."

But Christophe showed a dogged and unexpected stubbornness.

"I prefer to think that they are all good. All I have seen were such."

"Pouf!" Uncle Vauclain was really

By this time they had reached the village. Beside the river the temple of Rameses lay baking, a dull brown in the white sunlight. From its shadowed halls came the laughing voices of a party of tourists who were being hurried through the roofless rooms by an impatient dragoman. Down at Cook's



He found himself looking into a pair of laughing blue eyes.

Landing a great side-wheeler was being roped to the jetty; and a motley rabble of donkey boys were clamoring at the water's edge, dragging their red-tasseled donkeys alongside the steamer.

A mile down the river rose the great white bulk of the Nile Palace Hotel, surrounded by luxuriant gardens and high crenelated walls. Christophe had never entered those walls, but time and again he had crept behind the pillars at the gate and listened to the chatter of the pleasure seekers who came and went at all hours of the day. He had seen them taking tea beneath red-and-white-striped umbrellas in the late afternoon;

he had watched them on the tennis courts playing a graceful game with enviable ease. Once he had slipped away from the villa late at night and had run through the silent village streets to his listening point at the hotel gate; that night he had heard the distant strains of a czigany orchestra and had seen couples wandering beneath the palms—beautiful ladies with bare white shoulders, tall men in severe black evening dress. And to-night he was to be one of them.

At noon they returned to the Villa Isis, and Christophe climbed up to his little circular room in the tower. From his bureau drawer he took the smooth black dinner coat which uncle Vauclain had given him as a birthday

present, and tried it on, gazing at himself critically before the mirror. How old he looked! He would be a man indeed to-night.

During the afternoon Uncle Vauclain was in the village on business, and Christophe took a large, leather-bound volume into the garden to read. As the hours dragged by, he found it more and more difficult to concentrate his mind upon the printed page, and so it happened that he was dressed and ready for dinner long before Hassan pounded upon the brass gong as the clock struck seven. Christophe entered the dining room with much dignity in his new eve-

ning clothes, although inwardly he felt self-conscious and embarrassed.

Even uncle Vauclain looked somewhat strange and formal that night, with his long-tailed coat and great white shirt front. He seemed to have grown several feet in height, and Christophe imagined that his expression was more severe than usual.

The dinner seemed unusually long and tedious; Christophe could hardly eat from excitement. At eight o'clock the landau, bearing the consular coat of arms and drawn by a pair of slender Arabian horses, drove up to the door. Uncle Vauclain believed in upholding the dignity of his officialdom, so he never walked after sundown.

They went clattering down the sloping avenue to the village and through the deserted streets, while the good Achmed on the coachman's box cracked his long, ferocious whip and cleared the way of imaginary pedestrians with shrill cries:

"To the right! To the left! Out of the way, my good fellow!"

Before the doors of the Nile Palace they stopped with a flourish, and a splendid Nubian in red and gold opened the door of the landau, bowing obsequiously to uncle Vauclain.

When they had mounted the long flight of marble steps and had entered the plate-glass doors, Christophe found himself temporarily stunned by the riot of noise and color into which he was suddenly plunged. The hall, in spite of its immensity, was crowded. The air was warm, thick with the blue smoke of blended tobacco, and fragrant with the odor of mingled perfumes. Almost dazed, he followed his uncle down a narrow aisle between row upon row of little, white-topped tables, around which groups of men and women were chatting gayly and sipping their Turkish coffee from tiny golden cups. As he walked, his feet sank into luxurious khorassans.

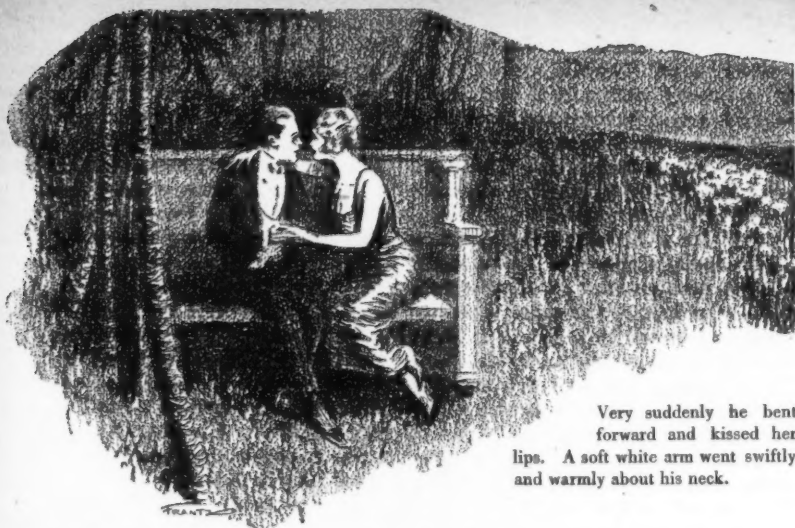
Gradually the first blurred impression gave way to a clearer picture, and he began to notice individuals. There were men of all kinds in the vast gathering, lean, tanned British officers in white mess uniforms, relieved by bright splotches of gold; rich, fat European bankers with immense pearl studs in their bulging shirt fronts; grave Egyptian officials, studying the throng with sharp little eyes and wearing the inevitable red tarboosh upon their bald brown skulls. And the women—what a variety of them! Young and old, gay, vivid, little blondes from America, handsome henna-haired beauties from Paris, tall, dignified ladies with equally tall, dignified husbands, whom Christophe knew were representatives of the great empire which kept a guardian hand over the destinies of Egypt.

Suddenly a figure in silver rose quickly from one of the tables and, darting out into the aisle, touched uncle Vauclain lightly on the shoulder. Christophe saw at once that she was the most beautiful creature he had ever laid eyes on.

"A daughter of an old friend," explained Vauclain as Christophe felt a warm, smooth hand in his. He found himself looking into a pair of laughing blue eyes. He was quite dazed at the suddenness, the unexpectedness of it. He tried to speak, but words would not come. He flushed. He did not even hear her name.

While she chatted to uncle Vauclain, he was able more fully to realize her beauty. If one had asked him, he could not have described what she wore; he was aware that it was something of shimmering silver, which fitted her closely, accentuating the charm of a not quite mature figure. He judged that she must be about nineteen or twenty—which is exactly what she expected. Her hair, exquisitely molded to a shapely head, showed just a hint of bronze in the goldness of it. Chris-





Very suddenly he bent forward and kissed her lips. A soft white arm went swiftly and warmly about his neck.

tophe noticed two Egyptians watching her at the next table and felt absurdly annoyed.

Presently she turned to Christophe. She nodded toward a curtained archway, from which came the sound of music.

"I haven't danced for ages," she said. "Let's go in and try the floor."

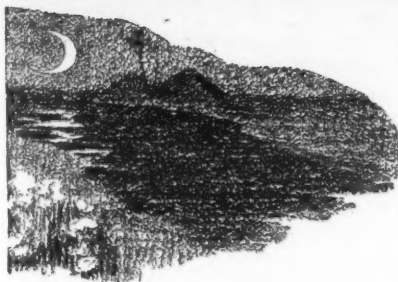
And, without waiting for his answer, she started toward the ballroom, Christophe following as if under a spell. Uncle Vauclain sat down at an empty table and thrust a long cigar into his mouth, smiling with that cynical little curve of his thin lips.

The gold-and-white ballroom, like the lounge, was crowded. Many of the men dancing were officers on week-end leave from Cairo, who guided their partners in solemn rhythm about the room, seemingly oblivious of everything around them except their partners. Here and there one caught sight of an American practicing with a laughing girl the latest step from Broadway, sometimes drawing forth comment from the gray-haired elders who en-

circled the room in a formidable line of gilt chairs. In a far corner the orchestra, composed of a dozen pale young men of Slavic origin, born with musical souls, played the dreamiest of waltzes. Many a pair of eyes watched the silver lady as she entered the room with Christophe at her side.

Christophe danced in a quaint, old-fashioned way; he became fully aware of this as other couples slid past them with smooth, gliding steps; but his partner seemed to enjoy every moment of it and applauded at the end of each dance. She was not quite as tall as he, and she had a fascinating little trick of gazing up at him while they danced that made him feel immensely older—as if he were the dominant spirit of the two of them. Her tactics were timeworn, but excellently adapted to circumstances.

Upon a table, guarded by a pair of Sudanese waiters, was a great bowl of golden punch, to which Christophe led his partner more than once during the evening, seeing that every one else was doing the same thing. By ten o'clock he



seemed to be in Paradise. As a matter of fact, he was really dancing well now, in perfect harmony with the music. The silver lady seemed to glide through filmy clouds with him. How white her arm looked against his dull-black sleeve!

There came a long intermission in the middle of the evening, during which they found their way to a broad terrace overlooking the Nile. A new moon, just above the rim of the Theban plain, bathed everything in a fantastic flood of bluish light. Where the end of the terrace curved to the river's edge they found a bench and sat down. Christophe felt his heart thumping strangely. He shot a quick, nervous glance at the girl beside him.

Yes, she was very beautiful. He was aware that she was looking at him intently, a half smile playing about her lips. Her eyes puzzled him. There was an unknown quality in them which he had never seen in any eyes before, a sort of moist, shining tenderness. He spoke in a voice that he hardly recognized as his.

"You are very wonderful! If I could only tell you how happy I am to be here, with you!"

"You do not need to tell," she answered very quietly. "I think I understand. Perhaps I am glad, too."

Then Christophe became intoxicated

with the sheer joy of living; this girl beside him seemed to be an incarnation of his ideals. And the night, too, with its subtle waves of perfume rising from the mass of exotic flowers which flanked the terrace added its own tribute to his happiness. He must win her, he thought. If only he dared! Very suddenly he bent forward and kissed her lips. A soft, white arm went swiftly and warmly about his neck. His kiss was returned.

Christophe was amazed. Somehow he had imagined, whenever he had thought of these things, that it would all be his part to play. That she should offer such a frank reciprocation of his own emotion was totally unexpected. But he was very, very happy.

A few minutes later she rose and ran swiftly toward the ballroom. Christophe stumbled toward the glare of lights, his head awlirl. At the door of the lounge he caught her slipping into an ermine wrap, about to drive back to the Nile steamer, on board which she was staying.

"I will be at the boat, to-morrow early," he told her.

She flung a happy smile at him over her shoulder and was gone.

The Nubian doorman came sidling up to him.

"M'seer Vauclain is waiting for you, my master."

Christophe hurried down the steps and jumped into the landau. In silence they rolled through the village, while uncle Vauclain's cigar glowed red in the darkness. The night air fanned Christophe's feverish brow; the chaotic thoughts racing through his brain began to arrange themselves into some sort of ordered coherence. He would see her to-morrow on the boat. He heard uncle Vauclain's voice.

"You had a good time, *mon enfant*?"

Christophe merely nodded. He did not trust himself to speak. All too soon the time would come when he must



tell his uncle how he loved the silver lady, how she loved him. When he climbed up the spiral stairs to his little room in the tower he was still deep in his joyous dream.

As early as eight the next morning, Hassan, with a pair of glittering shears, was following Christophe slowly about the garden and clipping from the young rosebushes the largest and most beautiful flowers they could find. With a dozen great white roses tucked under his arm, Christophe started down the Nile pathway toward Cook's Landing.

He knew that he was leaving the villa too early, so he found time to dawdle on the way, pausing for a few minutes by the ancient water wheel under a clump of sycamores beyond the villa walls, to watch an Arab hitch his creamy oxen to the traces before starting the day's toil. Presently he came to the bend in the river and stopped to breathe in the cool morning air. The Nile had never before appeared so beautiful, the surrounding country never so full of color. Across the river the durrah fields, like a vast green carpet, sloped lazily to the foot of the Libyan hills on the western horizon, a ragged line of rose-tinted peaks sharply etched against the deep-blue sky. He turned the corner of the path and looked down the slope upon the domed roofs of Beni-Su, asleep in the early sunlight. His gaze followed the winding edge of the river toward the steamer landing; he stopped suddenly and shielded his eyes from the glare. His hand, clutching the precious flowers, dropped limply to his side. He closed his eyes, as if to shut out forever from his mind what he had seen.

Down at Cook's Landing a single native boy was slowly hauling in the water-sodden ropes which had tied a steamer to the shore throughout the

long night. Half a mile up the river a thin wisp of curling yellow smoke, hovering above the water, showed where the Cairo-bound boat had passed an hour before.

In the dining room of the Villa Isis, uncle Vauclain thrust aside his coffee and adjusted his pince-nez to read a letter which Hassan had placed beside his napkin. He opened the mauve envelope very carefully and drew forth a single sheet of paper. He read:

MY DEAR V.: I suppose I owe you an apology, as I believe you expected to see me to-day. As a matter of fact, I'm not going to apologize, because I am really rather angry with you—for persuading me to play your game last night. I thought it would be a joke, in a way—most boys are so absurd at that age; so I went ahead.

I can't bring myself to tell you about it all, V, but it was pathetic—tragic. Tragic because I didn't believe such people existed nowadays, except in books. The whole thing had gone too far before I realized it.

I wouldn't tell him about it, V. He will never forgive you, nor me. As I can't face him, I'm leaving by an early boat to join my husband in Cairo. I still feel it hard to forgive myself.

E. L.

Uncle Vauclain looked up from the letter. Abstractly he glanced through the arabesqued window, which framed a glimpse of the sunlit garden. Christophe was just entering the white archway, but he did not seem to know where he was going. His eyes were downcast, his lean shoulders had a peculiar droop, as if he were immensely weary.

Before he closed the gate he paused for an instant. Uncle Vauclain saw him raise one arm above his head and throw something toward the river. The thing described an arc in the air and fell short upon the sandy pathway. Uncle Vauclain leaned out of the window and readjusted his pince-nez. He wondered why Christophe was throwing away those fresh white roses.



# Jimmy Needed It

By Katharine Haviland Taylor

Author of "Domestic Preferred," "He Hated Women," etc.

ILLUSTRATED BY S. B. ASPELL

**A delightful tale of a young man's adventure. Who but Katharine Haviland Taylor could have made it quite so funny and charming and real?**

"I'm not a soak," explained Jimmy to his friends, "but when I need a drink I want the privilege of picking it wherever I happen to be. No, I'm not a soak, but—sometimes I need it, that's all!"

To which his friends, for the most part, replied either, "Sure!" or, "Most certainly!" according to their tastes and the state of expression into which these had plumped them. And usually they added some comments about a gentleman called "Pussyfoot' Johnson," and how he had gotten what was coming to him!

But to get on, Jimmy Durant decided to skip off to Cuba. He said he desired a change, as many drinks as he wanted, and a chance to absorb some heat that didn't clank in the pipes. He also said his pipes were somewhat lame from some mustard gas which he had swallowed while in France, and that a rest wouldn't hurt him.

"Ever try to find out whether *work* would hurt you, young man?" inquired the parent who rustled the kale and had given Jimmy his last name and the set of his firm, fine chin.

"Never when I could help it," admitted Jimmy, who had strolled over to stand before a mirror. The effect of a new collar and a tie which would edge to the starboard kept his eyes and hands occupied. His father, looking up, frowned and then softened.

In spite of the fact that Jimmy had

not done much to deserve the second Durant that now graced the firm's letterhead, the firm's head almost worshiped him. He was a square youngster, he was more than good to look upon, he had spent a long year abroad, during which his time had been devoted to the driving of reluctant-to-go mules, and he had been gassed. True, Jimmy had not been badly hurt, and from the incident had captured more glory than discomfort—which was Jimmy's way. But—he had been gassed.

Edwin Durant rustled the pages of the *Wall Street Journal*, decided that Jimmy would settle down after marriage, and that recently he had *not* looked well.

"Takes a little while to get over the effect of that stuff, eh?" he hazarded, more to soothe his own conscience than for the benefit of Jimmy's reply.

"I s'pose," answered Jimmy carelessly.

"Well, yuh haven't looked well. Noticed it last night. Thought at first it was that yellow tie, then I thought —" Edwin Durant stopped, surveyed his son with his business eye, a searching and coldly appraising one, and ended abruptly with, "Where's the pain?"

"Cardiac pumping station, dad."

"What?"

"Oh, nowhere, I guess. I just feel bum; that's all." Jimmy turned away from the mirror at this, flung himself

into a deep chair, and stared moodily before him.

"How does Sue feel about your goin' off this way?" asked the older man. "Sue think it's a good idea? Why don't you ask Sue to go, too? Might as well close that deal, Jim. You been doin' a lotta follow-up work there, and you've as good as got her. Better get it on paper, eh?"

Jimmy laughed hollowly.

"Good as got her?" he echoed in a bitter, too-tragic young voice. "Good as *got* her? Oh, Gawd!"

Edwin Durant abandoned his reading to focus his entire attention upon the gloomy individual who sat opposite him. For a moment the crackling fire before which they sat made the only noise, and then came the investigation.

"What's up?" asked Edwin Durant.

Jimmy's face changed and grew sullen.

"Sue and I don't get on as well as we used to," he answered shortly.

"What! Why not?"

"Well, this war has made her too damned independent. She rushed all over New York, day and night, shunting officers wherever they wanted to go, when they ought to've walked, and—well, I can't explain—but, Sue's changed."

"She has, eh?"

"You bet!"

"How? Gimme a match, Jim. How's she changed?"

"She's not the same girl. The war did it—aw, damn everything! Lord, when I think of how she used to listen, just sit and *listen* to me talk! And now—well——"

"Well, what?" asked the father of Jimmy.

"Well, she cuts in with information and spoils it all. Suppose I tell her I think Hoover's made a mistake in some of his foreign food allowances. What does she do? She says, 'Oh, no, Jim! He hasn't. Last week I heard a lecture

at the Britmore and the man said——' And so on. It's disgusting! Before I went away she was tender and womanly. Just sat and said 'Yes,' believed everything I said, *never* contradicted. Now—— But what's the use? My dream has gone! That's all. Gone forever!"

"Shucks!" said the elder Durant. And then, "What's eatin' her?"

"These damned, new-fangled ideas! Her aunt's on the Republican woman's committee; knows what she's doing, too," Jimmy ended ruefully.

"I suppose she talks to Sue?"

"Talks? *Talks?* Say, if a good-sized, extra strong muzzle was to go up and sit on that woman's face, it would give up and bust! Had lunch there Friday when this she road roller was present. She rolled over me all right! After she left, Sue said, 'Isn't she wonderful, Jim?' I said, 'After we're married that woman shall never enter my house!' I said, 'You should resent the way she spoke to me; she called me 'young man' and told me I was misinformed; she said——'"

"Never mind about that," said Edwin Durant. "So you began to put the brakes on the in-laws, did yuh?"

"Yeh. Sue got sore. She said I never allowed her to think, didn't like it when she did, and that she had to. And—well, one thing led to another, you know, and it got pretty warm before it stopped. She gave me back my glass cutter."

"She did?"

"Yep. I told her I'd kill myself, but that didn't make any difference to Sue! No, she turned on the water works and told me I'd broken her heart. My God! I hate to see her cry! And—when I tried to—to fix it, she ran off: and—upstairs." A little muscle at the corner of Jimmy's mouth twitched as he finished. He scratched a match and lit a cigarette nonchalantly, desperately trying to be casual; but that little move-



"Can't you see that the soft type has gone?"

ment, that twitch which had reflected strained nerves and an aching heart, dominated, for the observing onlooker, all the young swagger which so futilely tried to cover a real hurt.

"Lemme see," said Edwin Durant. "Lemme see." Scowling ferociously, he looked at the leaping flames of the fire, through their hypnotic movement finding concentration, and, through that, endeavoring to find a way out. He cared for Sue. He knew that Sue

was the girl for his boy. She was a great deal prettier than most pictures, she was usually sane, she could manage a house, and she had the rare wisdom to carry flirting into the center of her domestic framing. Jimmy's father could see her, a pleasantly padded little person, flirting her way through life, always with Jimmy, sometimes—very mildly—with Jimmy's friends, and even with his father.

Jimmy's father had dreams, as does

any one who has not slipped into the quietest and longest sleep. And, because the mold into which we constantly pour ourselves eventually forms us, Jimmy's father, thought most often in terms of gold, even when he—rarely and always unconsciously—dwelt on love.

One of his fancies, which concerned his greatest production and the girl this production loved, involved something that centers a bassinette, smells of talcum powder, howls, is red and adored. This was to be called Edwin Durant with a "junior" appended. Edwin Durant sat alone in the evenings since his wife had slipped off to sit somewhere else when Jimmy was fifteen. Through the simplicity of his money-getting soul, Edwin always pictured her as on a pink cloud. But—to get on, for the most part, he sat alone. And, sometimes when he did, the young person who was to wear "junior" after his name seemed to toddle up to his granddad's knee. And then his granddad would say, "Hello, you little rascal! Fifty thousand more in your account to-day!" Which was the way he made his offering to Eros.

Not sharply did he dream these dreams, but hazily, lingeringly, lazily. None of the sharp, clear-cut quality that made his business moves, manufactured these, but another, little used part of his brain or heart. He felt them to be ridiculous, these imaginings; he was often ashamed of them; but they had grown to be a part of him and—to be a very dear part.

Of course, Jimmy might marry some one else, but Edwin Durant, junior, belonged to Sue and Jimmy. Edwin Durant, senior, couldn't see another woman doing such important things as the bump-kissing of Edwin, the second. And so—he stared into the flames of a fire, pondered, and groped.

"Never expected a strike in this quarter," he remarked.

"Neither did I," said his son.

"I'm going to fix it."

"Think so? You can try, of course. Wish you would, but—don't think I haven't. I've sent her enough notes to make a brand-new paper shortage, enough flowers to start a hothouse, and enough tender messages to make a house hot. Don't think I've been idling. I can work, when I'm interested."

"Yeh, I know," responded Edwin Durant, "but sometimes another voice—voice of an outsider, yuh know—sometimes that does it. Why, Jim, I've walked into meetings where they had bricks ready for the peacemaker, and I've made 'em take those bricks and a brand-new set of resolutions home with 'em. You wait!"

"You don't know Sue."

"I know women. They're all the same."

"No, they're not. Some of 'em want to boss the ranch, have the kids, do the cooking, and vote. Some of 'em, thank God, still cling!"

Edwin Durant struggled from the deep embrace of a big, soft chair.

"Going to see Sue," he announced, as he stood up.

"Do as you like," responded his son, who had not at all recovered from the depths into which his confidence had thrust him, "only—she probably won't see you. Committee meetings all the time. President of every damn-fool enterprise in New York. Says she's 'found her place.' And when I remember how she used to sit on a footstool by my feet, holding an ash tray—" Jimmy's voice faded. He was incapable of going on.

"Never mind!" growled the gentleman who was going to fix it. "Never mind! I'll fix her!"

But he didn't. Instead, she fixed him.

She did this after his motor had purred itself over the street toward Sue's particular brownstone steps, and

after Edwin had rehearsed just what he was going to say, and just what she was going to say. But she didn't. Instead, she said just exactly what he didn't dream she was going to say, which he should have known she would say, since he said he knew women. She disconcerted him from the start by looking quite as fluffy and helpless as usual, and he had been prepared to confront low-heeled shoes and a high collar. Then she put him in the biggest chair, because she said she wanted him to be comfortable enough to stay, and then—she turned upon him the glory of her dark and long-lashed eyes and allowed herself to look as sad as she felt.

Suddenly Edwin decided that Jimmy was a young scoundrel! That made his voice unusually gruff as he inquired what "all the row" was about.

She hunted a handkerchief, and this did not increase the ease of the delegate to the peace conference. He hoped to God that she wasn't going to cry! Rather apprehensively he said, "Now, now!" and then she began to speak.

"I just knew he wouldn't kill himself!" she said, a hint of resentment in her tone.

"You didn't *want* him to, did you?" inquired Edwin Durant, after a gasp.

"No, but—his saying so and not doing it is disgusting. So *many* men have said that to me, and almost all of them are married now; one of them has five children!"

"Are you put out with Jim because he isn't ready to wear a long black box?"

"No," she answered, "it isn't that."

"What is it?" asked Edwin Durant, leaning forward in his chair, thinking that Sue was very pretty and—that he'd like to spank her.

"I could stand it," she said, as she twisted a pink-edged handkerchief, "if Jimmy would allow me to think, would acknowledge that there is room for me

on the thinking platform; but—as soon as I step out there, he as much as says, 'Come back inside, dear, it's too cold and blustery, too rough for you out here!'"

"What?" asked Jimmy's father, frowning from his effort to keep up on this new track.

"He doesn't think I can *think*. I noticed it even before he left; and while he was gone, you know, I worked in lots of things, got out, began to do my own deciding, heard men and women who know things talk of affairs that matter and—well, it was just like a fertilizer. I began to grow." She stopped, drew a long breath, and then went on. "Now," she said, "he wants me to be just as silly as I used to be. I could be—any woman can act like a fool; it's natural. But I won't marry, having him think me something I'm not, having to act a part. I would be a better wife for knowing who is president and for trying to know what made Wilson's split with Colonel House; but Jimmy, as soon as I start, says, 'Oh, come, dear, sit on the arm of my chair. Run your sweet little fingers through my hair. Tell me what my little girl's been doing to-day.'"

"He does, does he?" inquired Edwin Durant with interest. "Bully for Jim! Didn't dream he had it in him."

"Yes, he does," replied Sue, as she got up and wandered over to a window. "And," she tossed over her shoulder, "it's damnable!"

Her caller looked surprised.

"Can't you see," asked the pretty little person, as she came back, to stand by a fireplace, "can't you see that the soft type has gone? Jimmy says they haven't. I know they have. They're dead. I could act a part, but—if he can't love me in spite of my thinking, I'll go *unloved*!"

She fumbled for a handkerchief after she finished speaking and began to dab her suddenly moist eyes. The person



who had hoped to "fix it" stood up clumsily to pat her shoulder and to say, "There, there!" with maddening and futile regularity.

"She's gone," Sue repeated. "Jimmy says there are soft, idiotic—he didn't say that, but that's what they are—women around. He says he wanted to—to care for some one entirely, and not to have her disapprove or approve of the Republican ticket and point out the weak spots in his political arguments. He says it isn't restful. But I can't help thinking——" Again tears threatened. "He'll find out," she ended, and almost viciously, "that w-women aren't such fools as they look! If he marries one like that he'll——" She stopped abruptly.

"You love him?" asked the man who had bravely entered carrying an olive branch, but who now only longed to carry his sky piece.

"Of course I do! I love him entirely, but—when he talks about the peace treaty—he knows *nothing* of it—I can't sit silent—I simply can't! Before he went to France, I wasn't interested in things like th-that, and when he monologued I'd s-sit and hold the ash tray and sort of plan new frocks or how I could manage to g-get two hats out of my next month's allowance; but now——"

"Wouldn't that smooth out after marriage?"

"I won't marry him until he says I have a head, and won't act grouchy if I try to use it."

"You won't?"

"No," she answered firmly. "It wouldn't do; we'd both be unhappy. He'd think he'd temporized with an ideal, and I—I'd know I was disappointing him. I simply won't lie any more, and if I did—think how I'd suffer, when I knew he was all wrong and an idiot and I couldn't tell him so. It's only natural to want to tell a person that he doesn't know what he is talking about,

when he doesn't; it's one of life's little pleasures. I——" She stopped, looked at a huge chair that was drawn invitingly near the fireplace, and then struggled to maintain composure.

"I *do* love him!" she whimpered.

And so—Jimmy went to Cuba; sailed alone, very full of his wrongs, and quite ready to act upon the advice of his father, which was to let Sue have time to think and to realize that this new wish for expression was only an epidemic and that there were still women who longed to be sheltered, who let their men decide great questions for them, and who gave and asked for nothing more than love.

"She'll come around!" said Jimmy's father on the morning that Jimmy sailed. "Maybe you could write her that you've found a nice, soft, appealing little doll on board. Maybe that would help, eh?"

"Maybe," replied Jimmy, but with some doubt.

"Try it?"

"Oh, what's the use? She'd know I lied. I suppose I'll give in after a while, run back to her, and then she'll do all the voting and deciding and talking for the family. It's hell! When I think of how she used to sit on a footstool at my feet and hold my ash tray——" Jimmy paused. "Never smoked herself, either," he went on, after a pain-filled moment, "but now she puffs away at the sort that make me want the ambulance. These *damned* new ideas!"

After which harangue, Jimmy looked at his watch, remarked that he ought to be "gettin' on," and, with a firm grip of his father's hand and a large check from the same, made his departure.

There was a good deal of flurry about the ship; people saying good-by, women wearing violets or orchids, a few children, some girls under the chaperonage of an already distressed maiden lady, and the usual assortment of men.

Jimmy took it in casually, went below to see that his luggage was safely aboard, and then returned to the promenade deck. Here, as he had left them, were people in groups, laughter punctuating their talk, gayety rampant, the expected good time and holiday already warming with its glow.

This atmosphere made Jimmy feel a little lonesome and his aloneness added to his hurt. If Sue had been reasonable, hadn't been so stubborn, how different it all might have been! He could hardly bear to think of it! But when she told him that he knew nothing about the peace treaty and that he was "talking like a fool"—well, then he had felt that it was

time to be frank. To be sure, her hot characterization of him had come after his, "There, there, dear, don't trouble your pretty little head about that! You simply don't understand, that's all!" But, she shouldn't have spoken as she did, and nothing would ever change his feeling about the aunt—she was a terror!

Perhaps, by the time he returned, Sue would feel a little more gentle toward him; and then, if he could make allowances and could remember not to talk of politics—she had once been a wonderful listener!—they could make it go. It was unthinkable even to dream that it was ended. It couldn't end, even though she said it had! His moody thoughts went back to the old days, those days in which she had absorbed anything he stated, gratefully, appre-



"My gosh!" said Jimmy, who was commonplace on all dramatic occasions.

ciatively, humbly. He wondered dully whether all such women were gone. And then—well, Fate often steps in with a new wrapper for an old sensation, and when Jimmy looked up to see Collette Meridyth, he knew that such women were *not* gone, and that interest in other women than Susan was still alive and within him.

She was so very little, was Collette, so femininely sweet and so frankly frightened at being alone. Jimmy studied her for several moments, studied her so discreetly that she was evidently unaware of his scrutiny. When a bolder look penetrated her abstraction, her startled glance seemed to appeal to his mercy. After her gentle petition, she looked away, her long lashes covering her eyes and casting violet shadows on her cheeks. Her color had not risen,

but her confusion was apparent, revealing itself in her small, swiftly moving hands and her shy, half turn away from Jimmy's direction. He felt himself swell as he realized his effect. He heard himself say, and very gently:

"Don't be frightened. The captain will vouch for me. 'Fraid I gave you a pretty steady lamping. Didn't mean to. I was only thinking that since we'll be neighbors for about four days, we might as well be friends. Alone?"

He had to bend to catch her "yes." After she said it, her breath caught adorably, almost childishly. It made Jimmy think of a youngster he had encountered in France, a wee bit of a thing whom he had found by the wayside, alone and frightened, made beautifully appealing by her tears. Awkwardly he had comforted her, as he took her along to a safe housing and to friends. And—she had fallen asleep in his arms on the way. Then, when he looked on the young piece of helplessness, he had thought of Sue, his leaping pity calling for her soothing hands and the dear, healing touch of her. Now, too, he thought of Sue, but with bitterness within him.

If Sue could see this girl, he decided, she would know that all women were not sufficient for their own needs nor capable of caring for themselves.

Jimmy moved along the rail and bent more closely above the girl who was traveling alone.

"I'm going to make it less lonely for you," he said. "You're going to let me? I'm harmless, honest, and I'm alone, too!"

"Are you?" she answered, looking up at him. He noticed that she had remarkably lovely eyes. "I don't like to go places by myself," she confided. "I—some women are so brave and strong, but I——" She faltered and stopped. "I suppose you think I'm foolish," she ended, "but I hate caring for myself and—and having to."

"Foolish?" exploded Jimmy. "Look here." He edged still closer to her, although he was really close enough before the move. "Look here," he repeated. "I'm just about fed up on these girls who know it all and vote and make speeches and so on. I tell you, a fellow likes a girl who doesn't butt into the world and try to run it. He likes the kind that need care and protection."

"Really?" she appealed, as if the information gave her a new impetus for going on.

"Honest! I tell you, the girl who makes a hit to-day is the girl who darns socks and lets the male rustle the shekels into the fold for her!"

His companion again looked up, this time smiling at him shyly, to be sure, but warmly.

"You express it so quaintly," she said, her softly modulated voice rising a little as her confidence grew. "I think," she continued, "that if you like that kind of a girl, we'll be friends, for I like men to take care of me and——"

"Some one else to hustle in the rubles?" he finished. She stiffened and Jimmy grew anxious. Perhaps she'd misunderstood.

"Men know how to make money," Jimmy went on quickly, as people do, who wish to skim over and be across thin ice. "Girls do not, nor how to get it. Better to let the men battle, you think that?"

"Oh, yes! Yes, that was what I meant."

"Well, I feel the same way," answered Jimmy expansively. "I'll tell you, we'll be friends. You know, Maeterlinck, or maybe it's Bergson—I sorta get those chaps mixed—says that time is subjective, that is, that it is long or short according to what fills it. Now I expected this trip to be long, but if you're in it, it's going to be short."

She veiled her eyes again, veiled them after a fleeting and searching glance.

There was a little silence which she broke, broke with an inquiry which was as simple as a child's might have been, as simple and direct and as entirely without finesse. Jimmy did not resent it; in fact, it only strengthened his feeling.

"Is it all right for me to be friends with you?" she asked. "My father would not mind our being friends?"

Jimmy took her hand.

"It is all right," he assured her almost huskily. "He would not mind." He was profoundly stirred as he looked down at her. What she had given him, he reflected, given him in the midst of doubt and hurt—his faith, renewed, a chance for his chivalry to assert itself, and new interest in a life which Sue had reduced to drab misery.

"I—I need friends," she asserted. "I—need a friend."

Jimmy was astounded to see her eyes fill with tears, astounded and shaken out of his consciousness of the new quality of their friendship. He took her under his protection, into his heart, made her part of his life, when he answered with:

"Poor little girl! Poor little girl! I'm going to take care of you. You must let me!" Once he had called Susan "poor little girl," but—not lately.

And that was the way Fate started that game. Clever lady, Fate, with so many surprises up her sleeve. If Sue had dreamed that in sending Jimmy off, she— But that comes later. Mistakes, though bitter and hard masters, are our teachers. She learned that, learned it through a cablegram that came to her from Cuba. The churches in Cuba are so full of romance, Jimmy wrote her, that they are ideal for weddings. They are— But that's getting ahead of my story. That especial information really doesn't belong right in this spot. If the wedding of—

However, to go back, so that we may go on, the friendship prospered. Col-

lette Meridyth depended upon Jimmy and he answered her trust. He did this by getting a deck chair for her, by securing a rug, by arranging pillows back of her, when she occupied her steamer chair, by hunting a steward when she wanted tea, by talking cheerfully to her when with her, by talking despondently about her when she was absent.

She distressed him; rather, the way the world treated her distressed him. The women on board were cats, Jimmy decided. One of the old "she devils" had actually said that she'd seen Collette in the stateroom of one J. Jerome Kirkland, a common-looking fellow whom Jimmy had, from first sight, disliked.

"They were smoking," said this person primly. She hailed from Xenia, Ohio, and she did not belong to the lucky-strike set of that city. "I could not help seeing and hearing," she added. "I passed, and—my stateroom is next to his."

Jimmy couldn't tell her she was a liar, so he only looked his sentiments. But he hinted broadly that she was wrong, after he had made three rounds of the ship. These were supposed to cool his fevered brain, but they didn't.

"I suppose I am blind and deaf and dumb?" asked the Xenia person with some asperity in her tone.

Jimmy grew white with anger and withdrew. And that was the day that he began to hold Collette's hand under the protection of a blue-and-green-checked steamer rug.

"I wish I could keep everybody from hurting you," he whispered, as he looked at the horizon, a horizon which rose and fell with the ship's twisting turns.

"You're doing so much for me!" she answered.

He didn't quite catch it and he had to bend above her.

"What say, dear?" he whispered. She repeated her statement. "If I



Collette's statements were always softened by a "Don't you think?" approach, and her few differences in opinion were ended and made gentle by some such word grouping as, "But you know better than I. I wonder that I even think of disagreeing with you!" Collette was the old-fashioned sort, the sort Jimmy adored.

It was on the third day and the day before landing at Havana, that Jimmy had his chance to help. The air was delightfully warm. People—even the most draft-fearing—abandoned great-coats, and comfort did much to soften even hard and un-

could only do more for you!" he said earnestly. He really wanted to. She had grown to be an exquisite part of his days. He could hardly think of their parting at Havana, where she was to stop. He was going on to see an old school friend, who had interests near Santiago, and his impatience about reaching the hitherto close friend had paled considerably in the last two days.

He was willing to acknowledge that Collette had helped him. Sue's face, although still fresh in his heart and often before him, was less poignantly vivid; Sue's unreasonable attitude and cruel treatment hurt less to remember. In short, Sue ceased to be the only actress on the stage, and the one who substituted for her really took her lines too well and almost eclipsed the star.

charitable spirits. The Xenia person admitted that possibly it had been the light-haired stewardess whom she had seen smoking and heard talking in the room of J. Jerome Kirkland; another said that perhaps the child didn't realize quite how low her pink frock was, and, besides, every one was wearing them that way, although she, for one, considered it indecent; and Jimmy forgave the persecutors of his charge. He was almost maudlinly tender over her on the day that brought her confidence.

"You will meet me after dinner?" he entreated on that sunny, happy, Southern-moist, warm day.

"Do you think the women will criticize?" she returned.

"Every one goes up there," he replied—they were referring to the boat



deck—"and it will be so wonderful in the moonlight, Collette. She's full as a tick to-night, you know. Come on!"

Collette hesitated, and then said she would.

Ah, Fate, you little scheming devil, with your close-packed sleeves! What a surprise you held for the tremulous, hunted girl! What a surprise for Sue! And what a surprise for Jimmy!

The moon was full, delightfully so. Benignly she smiled on the sea, turned it to silver, caressed it with her white-cold light as it laughed, in leaping, sparkling, breaking waves, back up at her. Jimmy, standing in a shadowed corner, felt his spirit flow into the spirit of the night. Romance called, grew stronger as the taupe dark turned to black. A tiny breeze came up and it carried the scent of orange trees, magnolias, and earth that is freshly, gently wet with a warm, slow rain.

It was so beautiful that Jimmy ached and—suddenly Collette slipped from his heart as if she had never been. The old, first love—her ghost will walk! Her echoes will remain!

Jimmy's arms were on the rail. He hid his face in them, a face which was hot with love longings and eyes which smarted from hurts were sheltered by a rough, tweed sleeve.

"Sue," he whispered, "if you knew—if you *knew*, Sue—" He couldn't finish his incoherent appeal. He did not know exactly for what he appealed, but Sue—the night—and love were tangled within his soul. He wanted them—how he wanted them—tangled within his arms!

It was into this that Collette stepped with her problems, and it was she who simplified his and made but one way possible for him to take.

He heard steps and raised his head. The sound of another footfall came after the staccato tap which meant high heels and the little girl who was unwillingly alone. Jimmy heard voices, one

strident and insisting; the other, brokenly pleading and shaken, that was Collette's!

"No," he heard, "please, Mr. Kirkland, please—*no!*" Jimmy heard her quick breathing, a sob, and, as he stepped forward, anger stirring him to the depths, he heard the insinuating and now soothing voice of the man whom he had, from the first, disliked.

"Little girl," he said, "I'm not a bad fellow. I'd treat you decently, and God, I love you! I'll call it square if you'll—"

Then Jimmy spoke. He never knew what he said, he only knew that Collette had cast herself upon him, that he felt her close as he made his threats to settle with the person, any person, who harmed her.

"Go," whispered Collette. "I'll—I'll tell him. *Go!*"

Kirkland, like the coward he was, vanished. And then Collette, moist-eyed and tremulous, raised her face to Jimmy's.

"What you must think!" she whispered.

"I think nothing of you that isn't good," he answered brokenly.

"Oh, Jimmy—to hear you say that! If you knew what it meant—what it may mean—to me!"

He moved closer. His arms tightened around her. At first this bothered her, but then, closing her eyes, she murmured:

"To be cared for! I am going to still my conscience for this little while—it is so sweet to be cared for!"

Jimmy agreed.

"Tell me about it," he ordered.

"I don't know—how," she faltered.

"You must! I'll care for you, protect you, see that you're unharmed!" For a moment after he spoke, Sue flashed through his mind. Sue was the woman he truly loved, he knew that, but this child was alone; he could not



see her suffer; and Sue—Sue had sent him off!

"Please, dear," he went on, "tell me of it. I *must* help you!"

She told him. It was a poor, sordid little story, a story which is commonplace enough, but one which, from her connection with it, made Jimmy Durant grind his teeth and mutter threats below his breath. It was an old story, and it was this:

Collette's mother had married a social inferior. "No one could be dearer, finer than my father!" interposed Collette loyally. And, after two years of blissful happiness, she had slipped from the world to leave Collette and her broken-hearted husband. He had struggled to maintain a suitable home for Collette, but things had gone against him and, finally, in desperation, he had sent her to her mother's sister, who accepted Collette only on the condition that her father was not to visit the house, and that they were to meet but once a year.

She had worshiped her father; her father had adored her.

Jimmy tightened his arm again. "How could he help it?" he asked. Without heed to this, she went on. She had been permitted to write him, and when he had sailed off to Cuba, to work for the mines which belonged to a United States steel corporation, they had planned that she should follow. Their daily correspondence had been full of this, how he needed and wanted her, and she, stifled in the middle of a hollow and false life, how she had wanted to go to him!

"When his letters stopped——" she said.

"Stopped?" repeated Jimmy.

"Yes, stopped. I—I thought I would go mad!"

"What made them stop?" asked Jimmy.

Collette tried to tell him, but failed. Tears hung on her lashes and her piti-

ful effort at repression touched the best in Jimmy's nature. Here was a girl who was tender and brave, who was both the sort he loved and could admire.

"Here," said Collette, after she had fumbled in the front of her frock. Jimmy took a letter from her, got out a pocket flash, snapped it to glowing, and saw the folded sheet. It was warm from her bosom and crushed from its resting place.

Jimmy looked at it reverently. He said:

Your father calls for you every waking moment. It is possible that he may live a month—certainly no longer. He has now rallied to say, "Am I to slip into the dark, without the touch of the lips of my little girl?" Come! For the love of God, come, if you would answer the last request of a dying and tortured soul!

"My gosh!" said Jimmy, who was commonplace on all dramatic occasions.

Collette hid her face against his shoulder.

"I had to borrow the money," she whispered, "from—from him!"

"I knew he was a villain!" said Jimmy. "The second day out I said, 'That chap looks like the villain in a second-rate road show!' You let me settle his hash! I'll tell him where to get off! I'll——"

Collette's shoulders shook at this, all control evidently leaving her. But with Jimmy's threat she raised her face.

"No!" she appealed frantically. "No! If I offend him, what will father do? If father gets well, and I pray—every second I pray that he will, Jerome Kirkland can hurt him; he owns stock and has a powerful voice in that company. Somehow—I must pay. He has offered me freedom from the financial debt if I——" She stopped speaking.

"But if you had the kale?" Jimmy prompted.

"Then," she answered, "then—I could live."

"My God! The cad!" gasped Jimmy.

The soft little person sobbed brokenly and deeply. Jimmy drew her head down to his shoulder once again. Softly he touched her cheek with his and then began to speak, to speak gently and persuasively.

"Collette," he said, "money is put into the world to harm and to aid, and—you've got to let mine aid. The usual conventions must be ignored. The usual feelings about taking money—a girl's taking it from a man—must be forgotten. You must let me help you."

"No! Oh, no!" she protested.

"Yes, I've got to be firm. Honest, Collette, you've got to! How much do you"—Jimmy stopped and coughed—"owe him?"

"Three hundred dollars. I—I had to have clothes. My aunt is getting old and senile. I only had one frock and no wrap. I wore a little shawl around the streets at home, but going away like this——"

"You poor, poor little thing!"

"You're so good to me!" She moved her head and, with that exquisite and childlike simplicity he had noticed in her before, she pressed her lips to his cheek. Jimmy drew a deep breath.

"A thousand," he whispered.

"Oh, I couldn't!"

"But you must!"

And such is the power of the masculine will that—she did!

But—such is the power of the feminine will that Jimmy was kept from telling J. Jerome Kirkland what he thought of him, which he exceedingly longed to do—with his fists.

"You'll be safe now?" he asked, the hour before their landing at Havana.

"I am to be met," she answered.

"I wish I could stay ashore with you," he said. "Go on taking care of you, making things easier for you!"

"I wish you could," she fervently replied. "You will never know what

you've done to simplify things. Oh, that is a poor, weak way to say it! But—you understand?"

Jimmy assured her that he did.

He felt badly after the ship started on. His own shore hours had seen her rattled away in a carriage, but his fancies leaped as he imagined what might be, what such a villain as J. Jerome Kirkland might have planned and done! Perhaps the letter was a fake, perhaps this was Kirkland's lure, perhaps Collette's father would never know she was in Cuba until—until it was—too late. Sweat stood out on his forehead at these conjectures, and as he feverishly mopped it away, he decided to go back. He wondered how soon he could get back and how he could stand the suspense.

"Poor little thing!" he muttered. "Poor, trusting little girl!" His spirit grew hot within him as he thought of men like Kirkland, untrustworthy, tricking, and bad.

The captain drew near and they spoke of the shortest way to return to Havana. Railroads were discussed, and stations which refused to announce themselves from Jimmy's tongue, ripped from the captain's.

"Write 'em down," said Jimmy, showing out an ever-ready pencil and an envelope. "I gotta know where I'm going, for I'm going there."

"Um, going back, are you?"

"Yes, I must. I—I gotta!"

"Perhaps you'll see Miss Meridyth again," said the individual in uniform. "I expect to, hope to, if I'm not——"

"Oh, you'll catch her. You won't be too late. She's booked for a month. Ever see her act?"

"Act?"

"Yes—she and that Kirkland fellow are running mates. Do a vaudeville sketch, dance and songs, you know. She can act!"

"She can!" echoed Jimmy weakly. "She can!"

"They've been down here before, three or four times, I guess," said the captain, as he moistened the pencil point. "The Cubans and South Americans like imported talent. Told me she always makes a good deal out of it."

"I believe it," Jimmy put in—put in sarcastically and with emphasis.

"Yes, clever little girl, Collette! I'll tell you, the days when women sat around and let the men think for 'em are past. They can take care of themselves now."

Jimmy, who was staring fixedly down into the white-crested, green waters, muttered:

"You bet they can!"

"No one on board knew she was connected with Kirkland," continued the captain, after some advice about the purchase of tickets, *primera* or *segunda classe*. "No, no one knew. Yuh see, she thinks it makes the other women criticize, so I kept mum. She said it would be easier for her this way."

"It was," replied Jimmy, who still stared, and with utter absorption, down into the passing waters.

"Attractive girl."

"Um."

"Has a beau every trip. Last time it was a South American rubber king. He had some kind of an idea that she wasn't safe. He was cut up after we pulled out, ranted around like mad, almost tore up the deck, wanted to go back, and all that sort of thing. Yuh see, they shelter their women down there more'n we do. I told him she was all right, what she did, and that Kirkland would look out for her if she needed help."

"She doesn't need any."

"What?" asked the captain.

"Nothing. What did that *particular* damn fool do?"

"Oh, the rubber man? Oh, he calmed down. Didn't see him for a couple of days. Believe one of the boys said he was tanked. Guess he was having his last fling before he appeared in the domestic court."

The captain turned over his directions, a remark about the weather, and departed. Jimmy slunk down to his stateroom. Here he composed a wireless which Miss Susan Holland received late that afternoon. It read:

You're right. They all do. Letter follows. I love you. JIM.

The following letter, by the way, was the one which mentioned churches and weddings. Sue cried as she read the message, and, after moistening it with the feminine seal of approval, disapproval, or whatever emotion starts the downpour, she made a vow.

"After this," she decided, "I'll be sweet, soft, let him do all the thinking for me, and—do nothing but cling! I only wanted to think I didn't *have* to!"

Strange, wasn't it, that on that same day, Jimmy, too, considered the creeping variety? Considered them hard, and made some decisions, the precipitate from which led him to speak aloud.

"Damn the clinging vines!" he said. "Damn 'em! Oh, Sue! My heavens, how I *wronged* you!" After which he rang a bell and, when it was answered, ordered a real drink.

"I'm not a soak," he thought. "I'm not a soak. It's only that I want it when I need it, and, by gosh, how I *need* it now!"





ILLUSTRATED  
BY  
H. T. DENISON

# BEATRICE REACHES BROADWAY

by  
VIRGINIA MIDDLETON

Author of  
"The Crown-  
ing Charm,"  
etc.

And, on the way, she came near creating disaster  
in the lives of Ellen Ware and her fiancé.

"I'm sorry, Ralph, I'm sorry, mother. It was a dreadful evening. I had no idea, of course, that Beatrice Lounsbury had changed so since college. Though, to be sure, I was never very intimate with her."

Ellen Ware, pale in her mourning, pretty with the sadness on her small, dark face, a bit listless in her apologies, looked from her mother to her fiancé, Ralph Slocum, as she made her little speech.

"I thought your friend was very good fun," declared Ralph handsomely. "I don't think you owe your mother or me any apology for her. Her play was pretty awful, that's true. But she herself was all right enough. Don't you agree with me, Mrs. Ware?"

Mrs. Ware shook her beautifully coiffed gray head.

"Rather a dreadful young woman, Ralph, I think. Oh, doubtless all very well if one is talking in terms of the eternal verities, but I am merely speaking as a dweller upon this mundane sphere, a dweller quite 'sot' in her prejudices. And her play! Tell me,

Ralph, what could possibly induce any manager to invest money in such a preposterous thing as that? A theatrical manager—a business man!"

"They aren't business men," Ralph stated comfortably. "They're gamblers. But I must admit that even for a confirmed gambler the—what was the name of Miss Lounsbury's offering to the jaded public?" He fished in his pocket and pulled out the program.

"The Purple Page of Peggy," he read. "Well, even for a confirmed gambler, that was a wild bet."

"She used to think that she could write plays in college," Ellen reminisced, smiling her unamused, sad, scornful, little smile. "Poor Beatrice! Well, she had better marry an actor or a manager or some one of that sort, and settle down to theatrical life on the fringes, so to speak. She'll never write anything worth while."

Ralph found that his affianced's air of finality nettled him. To be sure, he was a good deal nettled with all that pertained to Ellen at the moment. But now he had an added touch of resent-

ment because of the almost axiomatic superiority with which she spoke.

"You can't be at all sure of that," he found himself saying. "She's young—she must be about your age, isn't she, Ellen? She's got boundless energy, I should say, and certainly she has courage. She doesn't know the meaning of defeat. That sort of spirit may make her something big."

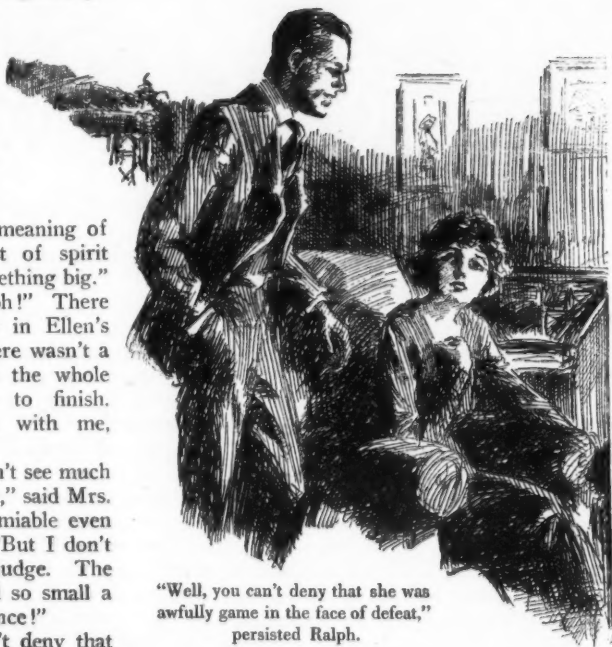
"Nonsense, Ralph!" There was a faint color in Ellen's pale cheeks. "There wasn't a gleam of hope in the whole play from start to finish. Don't you agree with me, mother?"

"I confess I didn't see much promise in the play," said Mrs. Ware, mild and amiable even as she damned. "But I don't pretend to be a judge. The theater has played so small a part in my existence!"

"Well, you can't deny that she was awfully game in the face of defeat," persisted Ralph, "or that's the spirit which carries people forward."

"I admit that she was quite as boisterous as her play and that she bore an unpleasant situation with bravado," Ellen spoke stiffly, taking the answer out of her mother's mouth. "Of course, it must have been horrible to hear at once, after the first performance, that it would have to be rewritten if it were ever to be given again. But I can't say that I see the hope of future success in that. Perhaps"—she smiled apologetically at Ralph—"it's because I am still so tired."

Mrs. Ware, benevolently withdraw-



"Well, you can't deny that she was awfully game in the face of defeat," persisted Ralph.

ing to the bedroom on which the tiny sitting room of the hotel suite opened, gave Ralph his opportunity to take as fervent a leave of Ellen as the collapsed state of her nerves permitted. But he found no urge within himself to prolong the sentimental moment. He was still hostile to Ellen and on guard against her wistful, serious, fine charm.

As he bent over her for a perfunctory kiss upon the soft-spun black of her hair and the clear pallor of her delicate cheek, he found himself thinking with an angry admiration of Beatrice Lounsbury, with her untidy mass of red gold above her flushed, crudely handsome face; there was no question



that Beatrice had tried to drown her grief over the obvious failure of "The Purple Page of Peggy" in too copious libations in the grillroom of the Hotel Renaissance.

Ralph had no natural affinity for alcoholic young ladies, but, at the time, neither had he felt any particular affinity for young ladies who seemed to flavor their virtuous vichy and milk with contempt for their surroundings. In other words, his disapproval of all that Ellen Ware represented that evening was so great that he found himself admiring whatever was antipodal. There was no question that the playwright, Miss Lounsbury, was antipodal!

Ralph had been engaged to Ellen for several years. He had fallen in love with her during a college holiday visit at the Wares' with her brother Arthur, who had been a classmate of his. She

and the family and their way of life had seemed utterly charming to Ralph, himself the son of excellent missionaries to India, and the product since his tenth year of haphazard boarding schools and college at home. He had counted himself the most fortunate fellow in the world, when, during his graduation festivities, Ellen had promised to marry him as soon as he could afford the luxury of marriage. Optimistically they had computed that that would be in two or three years.

Ralph had long before thrown over the ambition — parental, rather than individual — with which he had been sent home to America as a little boy, the ambition of returning as a combination of medical and religious missionary to his parents' charge. A job in an Oriental importing house was his. Two or three years would certainly advance him to the place where he and Ellen could set up their none too elaborate housekeeping. That period would also allow Ellen to finish college and to have a year of irresponsible play and of "pick-up" work.

And all that had been five years ago. The reasons for the delay had been twofold. Fortune in the Oriental trade did not advance with quite such rapid strides as Ralph had hoped, although, had Ellen been willing, they might have set up their modest household gods at the end of the third year. But, by the end of the third year, her "pick-up" work had become serious; she was deep in modeling with MacFee, the sculptor, who declared that her talent made it a crime for her to break off for any merely matrimonial reason. Ralph felt that he had been extremely modern



when he suggested that even after marriage she might keep on with her work for a while. But Ellen had demurred. So they had waited another year.

Their wedding day had been set for some time in the fifth year, when a calamity had fallen. Arthur Ware, whom his sister adored, had died under circumstances of peculiar agony for his family. He had been stricken down suddenly in the rooms of a woman of whom the family had never heard—the sort of woman of whom the Ware family never could have heard. To the grief of loss had been added the poignancy of notoriety, of shame. Ellen had collapsed entirely after the revelation.

As she emerged slowly toward health, there had come an additional small blow. A fountain group which she had entered for a public-garden competition in a Middle Western city and upon which both she and MacFee had built great hopes, had been passed over in favor of one—so her master declared—far more commonplace. Her faintly reviving spirits drooped again. Again the marriage was postponed. Again the family agreed that there must be no talk of it until dear Ellen had quite recovered from her successive shocks and disappointments.

The verdict of her admiring circle was that her patience and sweetness under suffering was singularly noble. Ralph was subtly given to understand that, since she made so fine a virtue of the mere passive endurance of life, it would be selfish to demand more of her, brutal to suggest that she emerge from her protective coverings of grief and disappointment and take an active share in the continued buffetings of existence.

Ralph had been, and he was still, very much in love with Ellen. He had admired her and all that she stood for—the ordered foundations of her life, the very soil from which she had sprung. He had been proud of the work of her

clever hands and of the quaint and charming images of her brain. And he had been not only moved by her grief over Arthur's death, but had been impressed by it. Ellen's was no trivial nature! He was glad his beloved was a woman capable of such devotion, such constancy, a woman who did not seek to cheat herself about the essentials of sorrow and loss. He had even been able to coerce himself into a certain sympathy with her deep depression over the garden group. She took her ambitions seriously, Ellen!

But all that had been nearly a year ago now! And his reverent admiration, too long exposed to the air of every day had proved capable of souring into a sort of peevishness. Enough was enough! The world was the world, not a mortuary chapel. Ellen was fine and sweet, ardent and faithful, but so, he supposed, were millions of other women who did not set aside the daily job of living to cultivate sorrow. He began to express these changing views, not in bald language, to be sure, but bald language was not needed with a woman of Ellen's subtle perceptions. And the more she heard his pleadings, the more passionately she had hugged to her heart, her grief over Arthur, her disappointment over her statue. She would not be hurried into forgetting, she would not, she would not! She would not wear a cheap mask over grief and frustrated hopes.

She had gone with her mother to Atlantic City for a midwinter holiday. The week originally scheduled for her absence had grown into two, into three. It had been almost clearly settled between her and Ralph that, upon her return, her cure was to be pronounced complete and she was to resume the interrupted preparations for her marriage. It had irritated him extremely that she had postponed coming home from week to week. When, finally, Washington's Birthday falling on a

Saturday, she had begged him to come down on Friday for the week-end, he had been half tempted to refuse. Her note had said nothing about the date of her return.

But, even as he pulled the yellow telegraph pad toward him to scrawl a brief refusal, the vision of her swam before his eyes—delicate, chiseled, pale young face, fine-spun, smoky-black hair, slender, proud little figure. His arms suddenly ached to fold her to him, his eyes stung with tears at the remembered sight of her. His lips yearned for her. He telegraphed that he would come down on Friday afternoon.

Ellen in the flesh had been a little less appealing than Ellen in memory. She was almost deliberately the frail, patient survival of life's cruel blows, almost elaborately wan and worn. Ralph had been startledly aware of a rude desire to shake her, and of an even more impossible impulse to shake her mother. The idea of laying desecrating hands upon Mrs. Ware left him almost cold when it had passed. He felt as if, before a shrine, he had felt an impious impulse toward an image. Mrs. Ware had always represented to him, since he had first gone to her home with Arthur, the perfect image of the perfect lady. And Ellen, apperceptive of his moods through intimacy and affection and even through the nervous morbidity of her state, had realized it all as if he had shouted it at her through a megaphone. It had sealed up in her whatever spring of affection and desire had bade her send for him.

And it was upon this situation that Beatrice Lounsbury, already a little overblown, though she counted no more than Ellen's twenty-seven years, had thrust herself. They had met her on the board walk where Ralph paced slowly beside Ellen's wheel chair. Miss Lounsbury, big, handsome, careless, shabby, eager, egotistic, had hailed her old classmate with loud exclamations.

They had not met before for years. She was in Atlantic City because the Brennans were there to try out that night her "Purple Page of Peggy." She was noisy, she was irrepressibly friendly, she was persistent. Ellen had started to plead her own ill health as a reason for declining Beatrice's insistently urged hospitality in the matter of theater seats and an after-theater supper; and then she had suddenly changed her mind. Poor Ralph! He must not be too austere dealt with upon his holiday! Perhaps he would enjoy it.

And she had gone to the theater and witnessed the dramatic fiasco, and then they had gone to the Renaissance grill-room with a whole noisy mob of terrible people—it was thus that Ellen described them in her thoughts—and had watched Beatrice Lounsbury in the rôle of the playwright snapping her fingers at failure. She did it literally; she did it metaphorically. She did it with wine and with cigarettes; she did it with burlesque flirtation with the leading man; she did it with the resolute announcement of a whole trunkful of further plays for Mr. Brennan to read. There was nothing which Ellen said against her in her mother's sitting room during the little half hour after the supper that was not literally true. But, on the other hand, there was nothing that Ralph urged in her favor that was not also literally true. She had been noisy, but she had been gallant. Her breeding had been atrocious, but her courage had been splendid. And, having been overfed on good breeding and underfed on courage for so long a time, her spirit had aroused in Ralph a sturdy admiration.

Three days later he left Atlantic City with the engagement of five years' standing smashed, and with a great emptiness and a great anger in his heart. There was a similar emptiness and anger in Ellen's heart. They both felt themselves cruelly misunderstood and

injured. But Ellen lacked the one alleviation which Ralph possessed. She did not have a new admiration, a new friendship, to help her along the bleak path of readjustment.

Beatrice's attic was shabby and unkempt. Ralph had been obliged to put down at the first the impression that not only poverty, but a pose, was expressed in her choice of an abode. But he had determined to accept her unreservedly because of his hungry appreciation of her dauntlessness, and so he had firmly closed every door of his mind to criticism of her. He had had enough of women who were meticulously particular about their personal environment, women to whom disorder was as unbearable as the single fabled pea was in the bed of the sensitive princess. Thank Heaven there was no question at all about the genuineness of Beatrice's courage!

Blows continued to rain upon her even after the spectacular failure of her "Peggy." Other plays, in the hands of other stars than Brennan's wife, had come back to her after their long absences had raised her hopes. Still others did not come at all, and suave secretaries of stars had denied any recollection of their receipt. Her father, out West, had died, and her financial fortunes, instead of being improved by that event, had been diminished. She had actually had to reach into her own little bank account to help with the funeral expenses. She wore shoes run down at the heel, but she wore them with gayety; she covered the rents in silk blouses with shabby sweaters and laughed. When her kid gloves gave out, she wore cotton, still with laughter. Ralph, who by this time had an almost proprietary interest in her ways, sometimes wished that she would at least wash the cotton gloves!

When she did not have money enough for Pietro's basement dinner,

fifty-five cents with wine, she munched buns brought home in a paper bag from the bakeshop, without loss of appetite. Her courage was undeniably splendid. When Ralph finally reached the point of proposing to her—he did it about ten months after his break with Ellen, and about two hours after having seen, in the current Academy exhibition, a design for a fountain done by Ellen—he had been carried away by a sincere wave of affection and admiration. She had just met another blow without flinching. Her mother had died during an operation. Beatrice's face had been white and drawn as she handed Ralph the telegram containing the news. But her head had not bowed.

"Poor mother!" she had said. And then, "I am glad she did not have long to suffer. They found out only ten days ago that she would have to be operated upon."

It had been a perfectly genuine affection that had moved him to put his arms about her and to draw her stalwart, handsome head down upon his shoulder. Tenderness and pity, rather than passion, possessed him. But they were so impregnated with admiration for the way in which, by and by, her head came up, her tears dried themselves, and the sorrowful lines of her lips were twisted into endurance and a Spartan gayety, that he believed them quite enough for the marriage to which he invited her.

"Because I'm down and out and you're sorry for me?" she demanded.

"Because you are you, and there's nobody like you in the world!" he answered earnestly.

"I wonder," said Beatrice speculatively. And then she looked at him again and melted into mirth. "Won't it give that tuberose of yours, Ellen Ware, a jolt!" she cried gayly. "I'll do it, Ralph!" And then she cried again because her mother would not know him. And then she demanded to be



"We don't see life or art eye to eye, Ralph," Beatrice told him rather rebukingly.

"We would only have made each other awfully unhappy."

taken to Pietro's to dinner, and behind a screen, she arrayed herself in a shabby black décolleté waist and an emerald-green scarf.

"I love a bit of color," she said complacently, as she came out. And to Ralph's shocked: "But—Beatrice—to-day? Your mother——" she interpolated a curt: "No mourning for me, Ralphie. Mother wouldn't want it, and even if she did, I shouldn't wear it. I love color. I believe in color. If I had money—— But even without it, one can achieve color."

It was while she was at home, winding up her mother's affairs, that she, so to speak, reached Broadway.

Miss Tommy Trevor, who had essayed to play a Rejane part and who had been almost hooted from the stage in Springfield, Massachusetts, where she was trying it out, had in reserve one of Beatrice's many dramatic offerings—a little bit of 'b' gosh' drama which was far better suited to the personality and talents of Miss Trevor than the French play. It went "with a bang," as she wired Miss Lounsbury. By the time Beatrice returned from Ohio, the play was in full swing on Forty-fourth Street, and a little trifle of about four hundred dollars a night was accruing to the playwright.

Ralph was glad and was sorry. He was glad that his new fiancée's faith in herself had been justified, glad in her pleasure in her prosperity, glad even of the fact that Ellen must now be choking over a meal of the disparaging words she had uttered about Beatrice's gifts. But he was sorry that his wife was likely to be so much more of a money maker than himself. He found, rather unexpectedly, that he was an old-fashioned male on questions of domestic finance.

Beatrice told him with great frankness that she wouldn't be ready to marry until after she had "had a fling." Ralph was both relieved and hurt. Her

"fling" took such form, however, that his relief was swiftly displaced by another emotion.

Beatrice moved down from her attic and established herself in a big studio apartment on the first floor of the same building. Gorgeous orange-red curtains hung close to the studio windows. Within the room there were riot of color and a positive civil war of periods. Beatrice had always wanted a Turkish corner, and, quite regardless of the fact that Turkish corners had "gone out," she had one. She had also always cherished a fondness for a picture of the Empress Josephine or Madame Recamier or some one of that sort, stretched upon a chaise longue. She fitted herself out immediately with that article of furniture, cushioned it in orange-red to match her curtains, and almost every afternoon was to be found stretched upon it, clad in gold-colored satin, with a floating green scarf. The shoes run down at the heels were replaced by cloth-of-gold slippers with Eiffel Tower heels. She set up a motor car and Ralph nearly fainted the first afternoon he found it awaiting her in front of the studio. It was a bright canary-yellow. It was, of course, the most conspicuous thing in the dingy street. It would be the most conspicuous thing anywhere on earth except in a circus parade, as he hastily told her.

"I love color," said Beatrice obstinately. "And I have the courage of my rhythm. I am attuned to bright color."

She got herself into a costume of rose and purple and silver, really quite beautiful, but the sort of thing never seen outside an English high-life comedy. She asked Ralph to come for a ride with her, and her handsome eyes defied him to refuse. Of course, he accepted. He was engaged to her, and if she was going to make a holy show of herself, there was nothing for him but to share her shame. Caught in the



afternoon crush on Fifth Avenue, he envied a sandwich man who was advertising a tailor's strike, as rather a dignified, unostentatious gentleman. Of course, the malignity of fate and of the traffic cop arranged it that Beatrice's circus chariot and a black-and-white taxi containing Ellen Ware and her mother should be jammed at the same corner for at least five minutes.

Beatrice, who had taken bad fortune with such high spirits, took good fortune less attractively. She had always talked enough, Ralph would swear to that, but now she talked all the time. She spoke as one having authority—as indeed she had. Had not Rosenthal sent out three subsidiary companies with "Boxbush and Lilac," and were not all of them bringing in unheard-of sums?

She permitted herself to be interviewed by serious interviewers and by humorous. Descriptions of her and her studio, with photographs, were in all the Sunday papers. She began to take riding lessons and could actually be seen mornings in the Park, mounted upon a white charger and rejoicing in the fact that she was attracting notice as the red-headed girl. She gave forth authoritative statements on subjects of which she was entirely ignorant. She bought Ralph lavish and quite impossible gifts—sporty-looking waistcoats, handkerchiefs with wonderful colored borders, a diamond horseshoe pin, scarab cuff links. When he rebelled at taking them and, even more, at wearing them, they quarreled.

Ralph, who had once believed he had found the fundamental test of character in a woman's manner of enduring sorrow, had now to add a companion test. He perceived that no man could know his friends until he had seen them under the withering sunlight of prosperity. He had been doggedly prepared to do his duty "like a gentleman," until that duty seemed to

include the exercising of the beautiful Russian wolfhound which she set up. He liked the wolfhound, but he did not enjoy having Beatrice insinuate that, with an income like hers, it was quite immaterial whether he, Ralph, earned any, and that he might as well come uptown early in the afternoon to exercise Gregorovitch, as to stay downtown attending to dull details of the Oriental import trade.

The break over their divergence on this point was serious. It lasted for ten days, before Ralph could bring himself to break his huffy silence and go around to the studio for the purpose of a reasonable reconciliation, a resolute assertion of himself, a setting of the day for their marriage, and similar details.

He found the studio full of noise and excitement, of perfume, of wonderful actress friends in wonderful gowns and with wonderful voices, with uniformed pages from uptown shops, laden with great dress boxes. The dress boxes contained Fifene's offering in the line of a wedding robe, Marice's of a going-away gown. All the femininities were exclaiming joyously over it—it had such color, such chic! Was there any one who had such a sense of both style and art as Marice!

Beatrice, it seemed, was going to marry an actor-manager whom she had met just two weeks before, a man who would find the income from "Boxbush and Lilac" and similar simplicities very useful in the production of realistic foreign drama.

"We don't see life or art eye to eye, Ralph," Beatrice told him rather rebukingly, when the lovely visions in rouge, powder, and georgette had tactfully withdrawn. "We would only have made each other awfully unhappy. I should be no good, I think I may say it,"—she achieved a look at herself in the long, colonial mirror, hung between two windows—"as a wife and mother

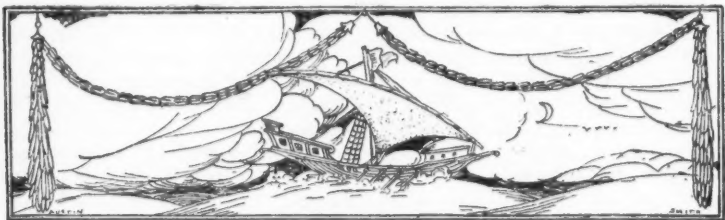


of the bourgeoisie. *Moi, je suis artiste!*" A taste for French interpolations into speech had come to Beatrice since she had reached Broadway.

Ralph took a decorous and friendly leave of her. He was even grateful, but he tactfully suppressed that fact as much as possible. Out in front of the studio, the canary-colored car was waiting. He lowered his lids against the glare of color. Peace seemed to descend upon him as he walked, peace and gentleness and the withdrawal of clangors and stridencies. On the fence

inclosing an unbuilt lot there were billboards advertising "Boxbush and Lilac," with excerpts from all the kind things all the critics had said about it—some of them garbled, as Ralph knew. He was devoutly glad that Beatrice's success, devoutly glad she had reached that haven where every playwright fain would be—Broadway.

As for him, he was bending his steps toward the gallery where a very modest little paragraph in the last night's art notices had informed him Miss Ware's "Resurgam" was being exhibited.



## MAGIC

By Berton Braley

**T**HERE'S a sea wind blowing and a flood tide flowing  
 And the old fret's glowing  
     In my veins once more;  
 There's a great ship steaming with a white wake gleaming  
 And the white gulls screaming  
     As they dip and soar.  
 There's a loud surf pounding and my heart is bounding  
     To the breakers sounding  
     On the harbor bar,  
 And my ties grow galling as a voice enthralling  
     Comes a-calling, calling  
     To the ports afar!  
 Oh, the ancient wonder of the seas that thunder  
     As they're thrust asunder  
     When a ship rides deep,  
 And the engines ringing and the steel stays singing  
     And the sharp spume stinging  
     When the graybacks leap;  
 Can my walls immure me or my duty cure me  
     Of the spells that lure me  
     Where I long to be;  
 With a sea wind blowing and a flood tide flowing  
     And a tall ship going  
     To the open sea?



# Masked Batteries

By Thomas H. Simpson

ILLUSTRATED BY J. VICTOR HALL

A clever story with an ending you may not have expected.

MR. SMYTHE draped his long, lithe, athletic figure over the telephone board in the imitation-marble foyer of the Alcazar Apartment House, and smiled down at the girl who manipulated the plugs.

"Isn't that the old war horse that pals with the chicken in number sixty-six?" he said, jerking a thumb over one shoulder in the direction of a large woman who had just stepped out of the elevator.

The telephone girl leaned out of her chair.

"Who—her?" she said, watching the woman through the outer doorway. "Why, yes; but she's Miss Manners' mother. I don't think you ought——"

"Mother nothing!" Mr. Smythe cut in with a laugh. "They don't look any more alike than you and I do. If she's her mother, I'm your aunt!"

The girl shrugged her thin, georgette-clad shoulders and turned to answer a call on the switchboard.

"I wonder what their game is, anyhow," Mr. Smythe went on thoughtfully.

The girl snapped a key shut and looked up severely.

"I don't think you've got any call to talk like that, Mr. Smythe," she said. "They're very nice people, and Miss Manners is certainly a charming young lady."

"Charming! Huh!" Mr. Smythe drooped still further over the board and smoothed his sleek hair. "Now don't start anything with me. Of course, Miss Manners is a pippin, and I'd certainly like to be a friend of hers. But I'll bet a plug dime that dame ain't her mother. There's something funny about them, I'll tell the world."

"Well, they seem awful stuck on each other," said the girl. "She's just gone out to the delicatessen to get their supper. She has it ready every night when Miss Manners comes home—except, of course, when they're going out. Then, too, you know what they say about people who live in glass houses. There might be something funny about you, if anybody was to try to find out. There's lots of strange people living in this house."

"Now, now, sister!" admonished Mr. Smythe soothingly. "Just because you got a real-estate fellow that gives you solid gold-filled lavallières for your birthday, you needn't think you can sit all over everybody."

The girl flushed and fingered the chain at her throat.

"Pretty, isn't it?" she said shyly.

"Fine as silk," admitted Mr. Smythe, reaching down and brushing aside a tendril of her hair, as if to enable him to look more closely at the trinket.

"But you ought to take better care

of it," he added lightly. "You might lose it."

The girl instinctively put a hand to her throat.

"Why!" she exclaimed. "Where is it?"

"Didn't I tell you!" said Mr. Smythe teasingly.

"Say, you!" expostulated the girl, clutching at his outstretched hand. She pried the fingers open. The palm was empty.

The girl's eyes clouded in bewilderment as she dropped his hand.

"I guess it must have been too big for your neck," said Mr. Smythe easily, "because it seems to have slipped up around your mop. Here it is!" he added, touching her hair and bringing his hand away quickly with the laval-lière dangling from it.

The girl snatched the trinket and refastened it around her neck.

"Now keep your hands away, Mr. Fresh," she said tartly. "If you didn't look more like a sleight-of-hand artist, I'd think you was a pickpocket."

Mr. Smythe laughed.

"Oh, that's nothing," he said. "You ought to see what I can do with a pack of cards." He straightened up and slapped at his trousers pockets. "I'm practicing up for a smoker next week," he added quickly.

Through the heavy, glass-paneled door swung a tall young woman bundled up in furs. A thick roll of red-gold hair shone between the brim of her smart black hat and the furry edge of her white neckpiece. From its triangular opening the girl's neck rose like a white column, full fleshed and round. Her face, oval and smooth, might have been called aristocratic but for a certain heaviness of chin and jaw. Her lips, artificially red and curved, were slightly parted in an habitual half smile. Her penciled eyebrows curved high over eyes of a dull slate-blue color.

Mr. Smythe swung around on his

heel and appreciatively took in the lines of the girl's graceful figure. As her glance crossed his, he lifted his gray felt hat and bowed.

"Good evening," he said affably.

The girl's eyebrows rose a tiny fraction of an inch and her head went back sharply. Her glance dropped from his eyes to his feet and back again.

"How dare you, sir!" she said in a rich contralto voice, full of indignation. As she stepped past him she added more crisply: "You bum, would-be masher, you!"

Mr. Smythe's chin dropped and he gazed blankly after her as she stepped into the elevator. Then his features contracted in a black scowl.

"I'll hand you a jolt yet for that," he muttered, staring angrily as the elevator cage ascended.

The telephone girl tittered. Mr. Smythe turned on her.

"What do you know about that!" he snarled. "Simply try to act like a neighbor and she pushes my face in!"

"That's what you get for being so fresh!" said the telephone girl.

"Fresh nothing!" snapped Mr. Smythe. "Don't I live in the same building? Ain't we neighbors? Here comes the old one," he added, and quickly turned his back on the door.

The cotenant of Miss Manners' apartment came in briskly.

"Is my daughter in yet?" she asked.

"She just went up," replied the girl at the board, smiling over her shoulder.

"Thank you," the woman replied, glancing with a touch of suspicion at Mr. Smythe's back. The elevator boy smiled as she entered the car.

"Miss Manners jes' came in, ma'am," he said, and opened the sixth-floor door with a flourish.

The woman opened an apartment door with her latchkey and entered a square room with two corners cut off to provide windows, each opening on an



The girl's eyebrows rose a tiny fraction of an inch and her head went back sharply. "How dare you, sir!" she said in a rich contralto voice full of indignation.

air shaft. In front of one sat Miss Manners, leaning back comfortably, with a newspaper resting on her lap and her feet elevated on a box couch. She had laid off her furs and outer garments and was sitting in a thin, lacy dressing sack and her petticoat.

"Hello, Kitty," she said, glancing over her shoulder.

"You're in early," said the other. "I just went out to the delicatessen; I'll have supper ready in a minute, if you're hungry."

"I can wait," said Miss Manners. "That fresh guy that lives on the next floor tried to mash me as I came in downstairs."

"Yeh?" said Kitty noncommittally, as she placed her parcels on a chair and took off her wraps.

"Uh-huh, and I gave him a danger signal that ought to keep him side-tracked for a while."

"I've been noticing him eying you up," remarked Kitty. "He's pretty fresh. Still," she added speculatively,

"he might be all right; he don't look very seedy, anyhow."

"I don't know what his graft is," Miss Manners replied simply. "If his feet was—were, I mean—a couple of sizes bigger, I'd think he was a fly cop."

"Maybe he's one of them divorce-agency shadows," said Kitty, stepping into the bathroom, where she hitched a gas tube on the jet and set a frying pan and a coffeepot on the two-burner stove which rested on a board across one end of the bathtub.

"Something like that, I guess—the way he's trying to stand in with the switchboard girl," said Miss Manners, returning to her paper. "He ain't—he isn't a live one, anyhow; they don't spend their time hanging around the vestibules of second-rate shacks like this."

Kitty laid four slices of bacon around the edge of the pan and deftly dropped two eggs in the middle.

"Oh, Kitty," Miss Manners suddenly called out. "Come here a minute."

"I've got an idea," she added, looking up as Kitty stepped to the doorway. "I was thinking it over coming up in the subway, reading this." She pointed to a headline in the paper.

Kitty read the item indicated. It heralded the Van Snydym's annual masked ball as the most *recherché* function of the season, going into a wealth of detail as to the floral decorations of the marble ballroom and the elaborate police arrangements to guard the jewels which would stud the costumes of the maskers.

"Well, what's the answer?" said Kitty, handing back the paper.

"It's a big chance," replied Miss Manners thoughtfully, "but I think I can get by."

Kitty pursed her lips and elevated her eyebrows, as the implication dawned upon her.

"It's big-time stuff," she said at

length. "But how are you going to get in?" she added practically.

Miss Manners stood up quickly and opened the box couch on which her feet had been resting. She rummaged among its contents and drew forth an abbreviated garment of robin's-egg blue silk which sparkled where the light struck its rhinestones.

"This is the real thing, Kitty," she said, holding it up. "It's in elegant taste, and it shows off my figure to perfection."

From the box she drew forth a black velvet mask and a pair of black satin slippers with silver buckles and red heels.

"Where are you going to get an invitation?" pursued Kitty, passively regarding the costume.

"Silly!" said Miss Manners. "You don't think them—those swells make their friends show a ticket at the door, do you? Why, that's the whole idea! Nobody knows who anybody else is till the unmasking at the stroke of midnight and all that. It gives 'em a chance to pull all kinds of refined rough stuff, you know."

"It's awful, big-time work," Kitty remarked skeptically.

"That's just it!" said Miss Manners, impatiently snatching the mask from Kitty's hand. "We've gotta break into the big stuff. We're getting known, I tell you, and this small work we're doing will only wreck us sooner or later. Why, I can get in there easier than a kid breaking into a toy bank with a hatchet, and—Palm Beach for ours this winter!"

Kitty was still unconvinced.

"All them jewels the papers write about is mostly paste," she remarked. "They keep the real stuff in safe-deposit vaults and only take them out to stroke them once in a while. They only wear rep—replicers at these swell functions the papers write about."

"Stuff!" said Miss Manners. "No

woman who's got 'em is going to run a chance of being outshone by some other dame, I tell you. They even wear the family plate on their chests."

"But how about the cops?" pursued Kitty. "The paper says the place'll be alive with them."

"Boo!" exclaimed Miss Manners contemptuously. "A couple of flat flatties in hired dress suits sitting with the servant girls in the butler's pantry! Better hurry up supper," she added, dropping the costume and taking the telephone from the mantelpiece. "I'm going to call up Dolan for a limousine. He's safe, anyhow."

She took the receiver from the hook and was answered by the girl at the switchboard downstairs.

"Please get me East, four-o-five-two," said Miss Manners in her richest tones.

The switchboard girl rapped Mr. Smythe's knuckles with her pencil, which he had seized in order to demonstrate that he could swallow it, and plugged "central."

"Right away, Miss Manners," she said sweetly, and repeated the number. A call came in on the other trunk line and she left the keys up in her hurry to make the connections.

"I told you they were nice people," she remarked, suddenly snapping the keys shut.

"Who?" said Mr. Smythe pertly.

"The Manners, of course."

"The royal family—yeh, go on," said Mr. Smythe.

"No rickety old taxicabs for them!" The girl pulled the plugs out as the winking light in front announced the end of the call. "Nothing less than a limousine!"

Mr. Smythe sneered nonchalantly. Then a gleam came into his cool gray eyes.

"Oh, stop trying to kid me!" he said skeptically.

"Well, I just heard her order one for eight-thirty to-night," said the girl.

Mr. Smythe shrugged his shoulders, but a slow smile spread over his face and his eyes puckered into narrow slits.

"I have a hunch," he mused audibly.

"Whadjasay?" asked the girl, the disparted pencil in her mouth.

"I just remembered a dinner engagement," Mr. Smythe said quickly. "Guess I gotta go climb into my rags."

On the seventh floor Mr. Smythe opened the door into his own somewhat circumscribed domain. Switching on the electric lights, he doffed his clothes and was soon splashing in the bathtub. Then, in dressing gown and slippers, he proceeded to take a number of things from his chiffonier drawers, laying a white shirt and silk socks on the bed, and got his evening clothes out of the wardrobe. A black mask, after some critical examination and adjusting, he decided "would do." Humming cheerfully under his breath, he proceeded to dress with deliberation. Once he paused while a malevolent gleam shot into his eyes. "You bum, would-be masher, you!" he murmured softly to himself. "Huh! There's a setback coming to you for that, Miss Haughty Manners!" Then he resumed his dressing with unruffled countenance. Into his shirt front went pearl studs, and into his cuffs links that were the last word in elegant correctness. As a final touch, he took from a small, locked box, secreted in a far corner of the writing desk, a wrist watch of such exquisite design and delicate workmanship that even as he slipped it on his wrist he stopped to finger it appreciatively, a reminiscent smile on his lips.

"Some from one place and some from another, but this baby takes the prize," he mused. "Cost a pretty penny in time and scheming, too; but it gives me the final stamp as a dear boy of the upper 'clahses.' It's worth it for that alone."



He carefully set it according to the more serviceable nickel watch ticking on his dresser, adjusted his silk hat several times till he hit an exactly satisfactory angle, swathed his muffler round his neck, got into his overcoat, took a pair of spotless white gloves from their tissue-paper protection, and sauntered jauntily out to the elevator.

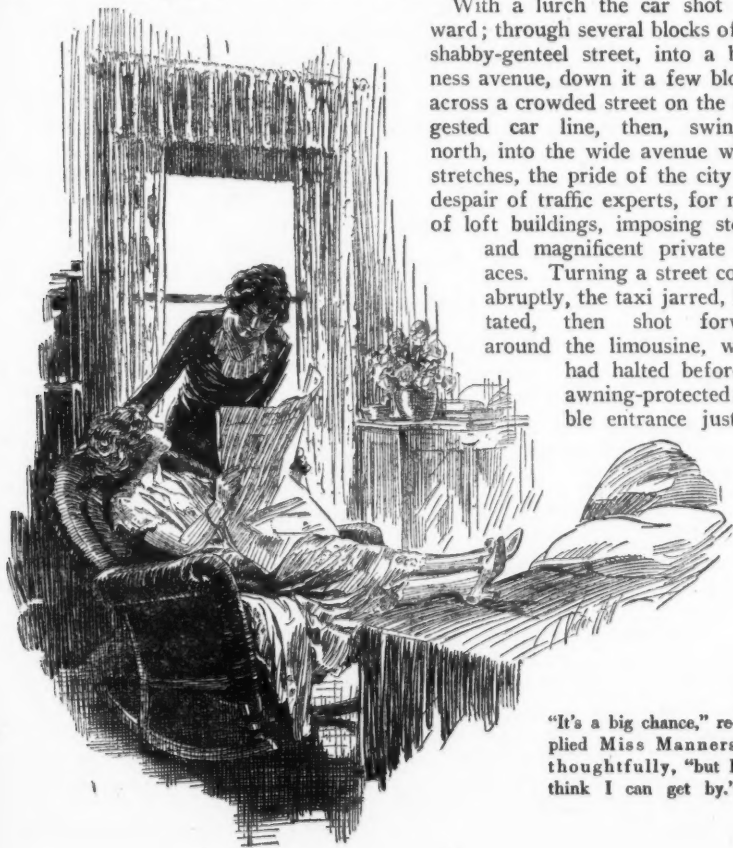
The telephone girl, relieved for the night, had disappeared. Setting off briskly from the house, he turned the corner, then crossed the street and strolled back on the other side, where a row of shabby, genteel brownstone

fronts loomed darkly down the badly lighted street.

After pacing back and forth for a while, from the corner of the intersecting avenue he saw a woman, wrapped in an opera cloak, came from the garishly lighted vestibule of the Alcazar Apartments and enter a waiting limousine. His air of nonchalance abandoned, he hailed a taxi and flung open the door.

"Dog that limousine," he snapped. "Don't lose it. If it stops, stop half a block behind, if you can. If not, pass and stop a little farther on. All right."

With a lurch the car shot forward; through several blocks of the shabby-genteel street, into a business avenue, down it a few blocks, across a crowded street on the congested car line, then, swinging north, into the wide avenue which stretches, the pride of the city and despair of traffic experts, for miles of loft buildings, imposing stores, and magnificent private palaces. Turning a street corner abruptly, the taxi jarred, hesitated, then shot forward around the limousine, which had halted before an awning-protected marble entrance just off



"It's a big chance," replied Miss Manners thoughtfully, "but I think I can get by."

the Avenue. Several doors beyond, well out of the lights, the taxi stopped also.

Mr. Smythe was on the pavement at the instant, fumbling in his pocket, but his eyes were on the awninged pathway, down which he saw the opera-cloaked figure, now masked discreetly, trip past uniformed flunkies into the brilliantly lighted house.

The taxi was paid and dismissed. The elegantly clad figure, which might have been that of a college athlete-stockbroker, sauntered toward the mansion, into which guests, alone or in chattering groups, were now going at irregular intervals. By the curved marble balustrade a bored, but conscientious policeman had taken up his post. Toward him strolled the impeccable Mr. Smythe, an indefinably professional air permeating his manner and voice.

"Detailed here?" he queried, stopping by the policeman, through whose honest, if somewhat inadequate, brain flitted a vague memory of some previous meeting, probably in the line of duty, with the distinguished stranger.

"No, I'm the man on the beat."

"Anybody inside yet?"

"I ain't seen him, if there is. Sure, they don't need nobody extra on the inside. All them jewels the papers write about is paste. Sure, they do be keeping the real wans in safe-deposit vaults. What they wear's all immy-tashun. They're a nairvus lot!"

The passer-by nodded professionally, then started to move on; but his heel must have slipped on one of the hard little spots of ice which scalloped the sidewalk, and he lurched sideways against the officer, clawing the latter's coat, as he tried to save himself.

"I beg your pardon," he said, steadying himself and laughing nervously.

"Sure," said the officer, who had grasped his arm in time to prevent him from actually falling, "it wouldn't be no trouble a-tall to break your neck on these sidewalks, the way these here

rich people let their flunkies clean 'em off."

"Well, thanks to you, I didn't break mine," said Smythe genially, and passed on down the street.

The policeman looked after him, idly remembering the paragraph in the regulations which refers to the duty of courtesy to strangers, and turned about, passing the door and resuming the patrol of his beat.

Around the corner, Smythe hailed a taxi and drove briskly back to the mansion, entering with a group of guests whose limousine had just preceded his. At the door he loitered behind. Under his coat he showed the glint of a police shield to the butler, who was not unused to the presence of the police at important functions.

"I didn't know that the master had arranged for special protection to-night," the butler said. "However, I presume it's just as well. If you'll just come this way, sir," he added affably, "I'll show you the lay of the land."

The ballroom was not crowded, but a buzz of gay voices showed that those who had already arrived were striking the keynote of jollity early. Smythe, discreetly masked, lounged at the door until his roving eye fell upon a woman, every detail of whose costume, from the sparkling circlet in her blond hair to the twinkling red-heeled slippers below her short, robin's-egg-blue skirt, proclaimed her the most becomingly, if not the most showily gowned woman in the great marble hall. Evidently conscious of the expert accuracy with which the costume accentuated the exquisite lines of her figure, she was pirouetting flirtatiously before an eighteenth-century dandy whose monocle expressed quiet enjoyment of her airs and graces.

The music began again and, on the arm of her Beau Brummell, the coquette swept by the watching Mr. Smythe. Over her partner's shoulder

she caught his eyes upon her and, anxious for conquest, she gave him a sidelong glance from under the mask.

As the musicians began to take their instruments for the next waltz, Smythe left his place with a group of half-bored men whose masks were a concession which their formal evening clothes did not bear out, and sought the blue costume. As he approached, its wearer was talking animatedly with a stately dowager, unmasked, who seemed to regard the gathering from the indulgent peace of old age. With a pretty air of deference she of the blond tresses bent over the gray ones to fasten back a straying lock of hair—much, except for the femininity of the gesture, as Mr. Smythe had bent to tease the telephone girl about her pendant.

The music began a soft, but imperious swirl of sound as he reached her side. Instantly the floor was filled with dancing couples. The blond head turned with a start as he spoke into her ear.

"I claim this as my dance. You promised it in the look you gave me while you were dancing last time."

Her poise was instantly resumed. With the correct amount of reserve she hesitated, looked up at him flirtatiously, then slipped into his arms as if the music were irresistible.

"Paste, of course," was Mr. Smythe's brief verdict of the glittering circlet in the blond hair so confidently resting on his shoulder. But aloud he was "playing the society act," as he phrased it, with every evidence of an almost too-flattering success.

"If I didn't know her game, I'd sure think the little girl had a terrible crush on me," he mused. "No chance of her calling this society boy any rough words like 'bum' and 'masher'!"

"But I can't dance every dance with you," the blue-costumed one protested prettily an hour later. "I'm afraid I've already made myself conspicuous to my friends."

"You haven't danced every dance with me by any means." Mr. Smythe's air, carefully founded on those of the idlers who adorned the supper table and smoking room, combined ardor and indolence. "I've been neglected for every one who came along. Apparently you've enjoyed your evening."

The slate-blue eyes flashed, then her slight air of excitement was veiled under a more conventional pose of boredom. They danced again and again. He surrendered her to the eighteenth-century beau, who led her to a gay group of laughing maskers, men and women, who seemed teasing her with questions as if piqued as to her identity.

"About time for the grand-stand play," murmured Mr. Smythe, taking up his stand in the arched doorway. As she whirled by on the beau's arm he detected an expression of fatigue crossing her face, and she seemed to finish the dance with difficulty. Stopping near the attentive Mr. Smythe, she dismissed the beau on an errand and, as she turned toward the door, her hand to her forehead, she met him coming to her with an air of solicitude.

"You're tired. I knew you'd overdo it," he said rather ambiguously and, grasping her elbow, steered her purposefully away.

"Where are you taking me?" she murmured. "I only felt a little faint."

"We'll find a quiet corner in the conservatory," he answered. "These crushes are a terrible bore, after all."

With a sidelong glance, she sighed wearily and, half leading and half led, they pushed through the chattering couples into the cool air of the conservatory. The snatches of wild music came to them mingled with the buzz of voices and laughter, as if from some bacchanalian rout in another world. Mr. Smythe coolly inspected his wrist watch, and his companion, who had leaned back in relaxation, sat up with sudden interest.

"What time is it?" she asked. Then, more languidly, "Whatever time it is, I think I shan't stay here much longer. To-morrow will be a very fatiguing day—some charity work I've undertaken for dear Mrs. de Puyster, and——"

"Nearly midnight," he answered. "We unmask then, you know," and he leaned forward till their challenging eyes were very near.

The girl studied him before she answered. There is a very peculiar power of concealing identity contained in a simple bit of black silk. Familiar faces appear strangely altered, revealing unthought-of characteristics. To unknown faces the masks give the equally strange appearance of some lurking familiarity, while to all alike the veiled eyes give a curious effect of omniscience and often of baleful power.

Struggling with the baffling sense of familiarity which assailed her, as the masked eyes glinted into hers, the girl, more nearly frightened and, to her own belief, with less cause than any time during the evening, sighed again and looked down.

"Yes, we—unmask," she answered. "It is strange I cannot place you. But then, I have traveled so much this last year that my New York threads are badly tangled."



"I didn't know they were so clever at headquarters." She spoke evenly, yet her voice broke a little.

Smythe smiled mysteriously.

"I cannot call you by name"—he dropped his voice to almost a whisper—"but yet I seem to know a great deal about you. I can hardly wait till the masks come off." And he reached out his hand toward hers, the wrist watch glittering, as a ray from a concealed light overhead struck on it.

Though she recoiled laughingly, in a moment she slipped her arm intimately through his. He moved close to her and grasped the soft hand with which she gestured for silence. An Indian squaw with long, golden braids rustled through the palms near them

and was joined at the tinkling fountain by a fierce-looking, but rather stout Mephistopheles. Then, arm in arm, they disappeared behind a similar cluster of palms, and the woman's slight, exhilarated laughter floated out to them.

"They may be disappointed when they unmask," she said.

"Life is full of disappointments."

Into his voice had come a new note of decision, almost a significant intonation. As he spoke, he shifted his arm suddenly, striking her hand as it fell away. For a second the wrist watch showed its cool platinum surface between them, then he quietly picked it up and slipped it back on his wrist.

"The fastenings of these things come undone so easily," he remarked. "What were we talking about—disappointments?"

She rose, her heart beating so that a muscle in her white throat throbbed, but she contrived a tired laugh as he rose beside her, very close to that beating muscle.

"I flatter myself you'll be disappointed when I go," she said. "But really I must, for I am thoroughly exhausted." She extended a hand languidly. "Good-by! It's been jolly fun flirting along this way. I hope we run across each other again somewhere."

He took the hand she extended politely, but his hand tightened in a grip from which she could not draw hers, and he pulled her down to the seat beside him again.

"I have been watching you ever since you entered the house," he said quietly.

She gasped, but seemed about to throw the remark aside with some retort in her assumed character. His grasp on her wrist was unmoving.

"It's no use," he assured her. "We knew you'd be here, so they sent me." With his free hand he brushed his coat aside so that the covered badge glinted a second, then was hidden again.

The girl continued to gaze steadily

into his eye. It seemed as if she were making a decision. At last she shuddered, tossed her head, and a hard little laugh came from her set lips.

"I didn't know they were so clever at headquarters." She spoke evenly, yet her voice broke a little.

He released her wrist, but without relaxing his watchful attitude.

"Which shall it be?" he said. "Restitution or—the pen? Hand 'em back, and to avoid scandal we'll let you go. Remember, you haven't got a chance."

For an instant the girl remained motionless, trying to pierce his mask. Then she laughed, somewhat bitterly, and reached into her bosom. In a moment her trembling fingers dropped into his waiting palm a little stream of sparkling jewels. He pawed the baubles.

"One more," he breathed sharply. "You got five sunbursts, a hairpin, a jeweled barrette, and three lavallières. Cough up the hairpin!"

Ten minutes later a black-cloaked figure was gallantly escorted to a waiting limousine, handed in with exquisite politeness, and driven off. The man looked after the retreating machine, still with the smile on his thin lips.

"Bum and would-be masher, am I? I changed the 'would-be' into the real thing this time, all right! And you'll never know that if you hadn't given me the freeze-out only a few hours ago, we might have pulled off this little affair and lots like it in fine shape together!

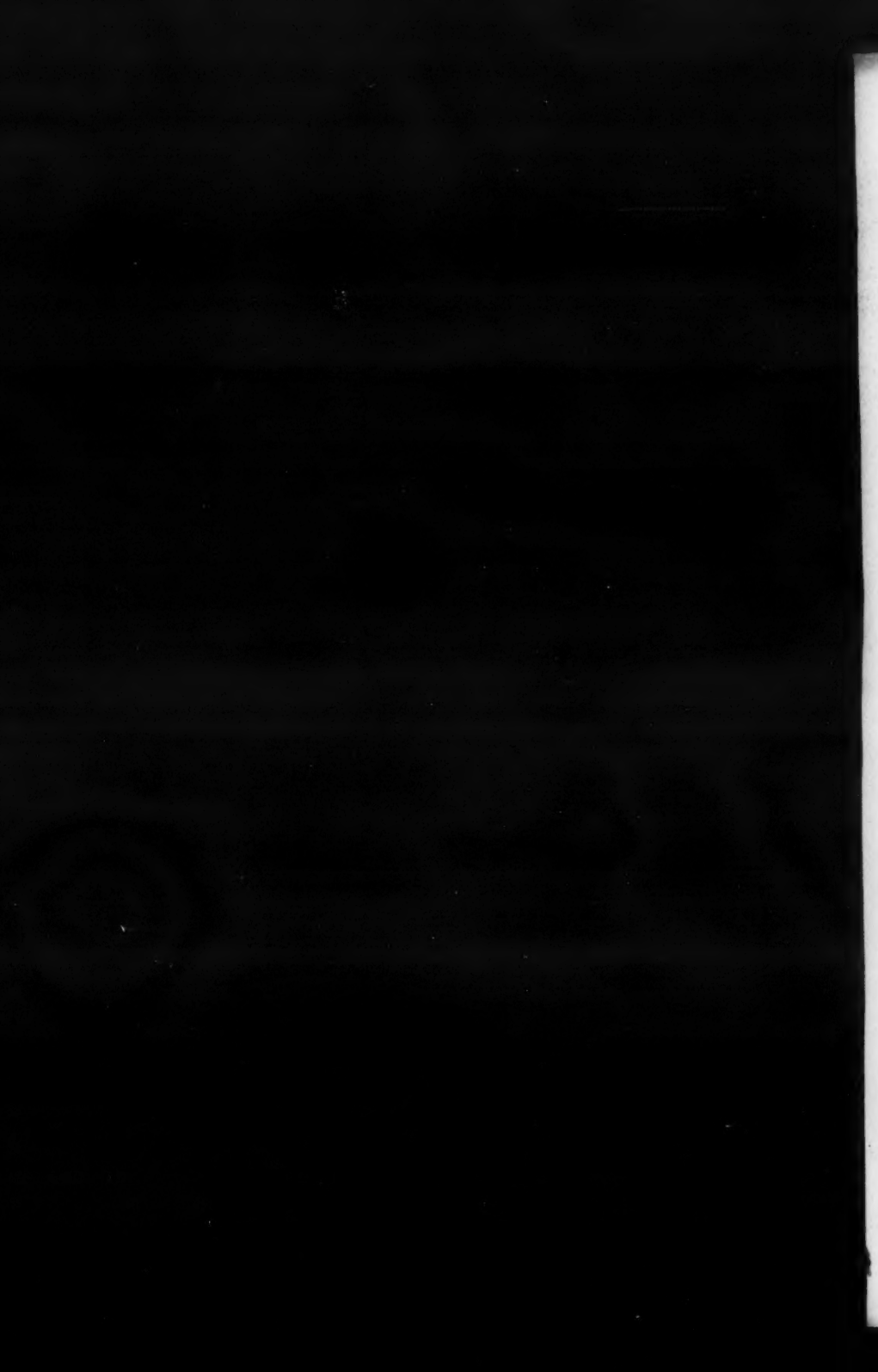
"If that cop wakes up and finds he's lost his shield," Smythe meditated, "he'll come back here to look for it. Well, it might keep him out of trouble to pick it up."

Again there was a glint as, stooping quickly, he deposited the badge by the edge of the red carpet.

There the bright, nickel-plated insignia of law and order winked merrily in the glare of the entrance lights as its quondam possessor strode rapidly to the corner and vanished.

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# New York Stage Successes

## "NOT SO LONG AGO"

by  
Arthur Richman

A Captivating, Romantic Comedy of  
the early '70's.

THE curtain rises upon a modest street in the New York of fifty years ago. At the right is an old house occupied by Michael Dover, a luckless inventor, and his romantic young daughter, Elsie, who sews to help keep the little home together. Elsie sits reading on the steps when Sam Robinson, approaching on a great, high-wheeled velocipede, dismounts. Sam is a "smart Aleck," who has set out to win Elsie.

ELSIE: Well, Sam, I see you're riding it.

SAM (*wiping his brow*): Hot, ain't it? It's all right—your father reading about a new French invention, but why does he try his version of it on me?

ELSIE: So it isn't a success! Poor daddy!

SAM: It's a success as an instrument of torture, but nothin' else. I only ride it because I want your father to give his consent. You must be as anxious about it as I am. (*ELSIE protests.*) There's no sense in your refusing. When I want a thing, I get it! That's the spirit that makes me the success I am! Now, my business takes me all the way from New York to Chicago. Think they'd give me a route like that if I wasn't good?



Eva Le Gallienne as *Elsie*, the romantic little seamstress.

ELSIE: What a lot of ink the country must use!

SAM: They use more since I got into the business. But it ain't ink alone. My firm makes writing fluids, copying ink, indelible ink, mucilage— Well what do you say?

ELSIE: Better stick to your mucilage, Sam.

SAM: Ha! I knew you'd say that. But it don't worry me. When a man puts me out of his office, I come back the next day. You can't resist me forever.

ELSIE: Oh, Sam, how much you like yourself!

SAM: Why shouldn't I? Everybody likes me. You do, don't you?

By Courtesy of the Author and of Messrs. Shubert, Producers.

ELSIE: No.

SAM: There you are! Any other fellow would be discouraged by a thing like that, but it don't make the least difference to me. I'm broad-minded. I realize you've made a mistake.

ELSIE: Sam, it's wonderful how you know everything better than anybody else.

SAM: So you've noticed that! I can't help it—it just comes natural to me.

ELSIE: Oh, you don't *really*. You only *think* you do. Do you remember how sure you were that nobody would engage me as a seamstress just because I was young? And how you argued with father about the population of New York? Father was right—the census showed that it was over a million.

SAM: Oh, I admit I make some small mistakes; nobody's perfect. Horace Greeley makes mistakes, and so does President Grant. Every great man has his weakness. (MARY and SILVIA, two young friends of ELSIE'S, enter.)

MARY: Did I hear Sam Robinson say "great man"? I suppose he's talking about himself again.

SILVIA: I've just been to the grocer's for eggs. Isn't it terrible how much they cost—twenty-five cents a dozen!

SAM: Merely temporary. Within six months they'll drop to fifteen cents, and they'll never go any higher. I used to be in the poultry business, and I know what I'm talking about.

SILVIA: I wish you'd come and talk politics to my sick brother. He'd love it.

SAM: I haven't time for *talk*. But you go home and tell him Horace Greeley will be the next president. I ain't permitted to tell my authority, but I know what I'm talking about.

It would seem that Sam is not Elsie's only lover, for there are significant glances between the girls at mention of the Ballards, the aristocratic family for whom Elsie is sewing. Sam's suspicions are aroused.

SAM: That's the reason for it all! That young Ballard—he's been making love to you again. Am I right?

ELSIE (*archly*): We had a short conversation to-day.

SAM: What did you talk about?

ELSIE: I don't have to tell you *that*.

SAM: You'll tell your father if *he* asks you. Where is *he*?

ELSIE: Upstairs, working on his invention.

SAM: We'll see what *he* thinks about it.

(Runs into the house.) When I want a thing, I get it!

SILVIA: Isn't he mean? The tattletale! (ELSIE'S manner changes. The seamstress turns dreamer, as MARY and SILVIA draw closer.)

ELSIE: Billy came home early to-day. Half past twelve—in time for lunch.

SILVIA (*breathlessly*): On purpose to see you?

ELSIE: He didn't say so. But, just the same, he insisted upon my having lunch with them—with the family, you know—Billy, his mother, his sister Ursula, and I. We had a delightful repast. I was treated like a guest, not only by Billy, but by the others as well. During the repast we discussed many beautiful things. Billy, besides being handsome and manly, has a fine appreciation of the better things of life. It was fortunate we girls went to that *matinée* of "East Lynne" last year, because they referred to it. We agreed that it had distinct merit. Then the conversation drifted to other things. There were moments when I couldn't talk at all and simply had to listen with an intelligent look in my eyes. I've never heard the opera, for instance, and I've never been to Europe. But I didn't pretend, for pretending is undignified; and as they have perfect manners, they invariably changed the subject.

MARY: What happened after lunch?

ELSIE: I returned to my work in Mrs. Ballard's boudoir, but I hadn't been there ten minutes when Billy came in. He knocked at the door and asked if I would grant him the privilege of a few moments' conversation. I was at the sewing machine and, pulling up a chair, he sat beside me. He said nothing—merely looked. For at least two minutes the silence was complete, broken only by the whir of the machine. I blushed beneath his steady stare. Some men, when they look at you, cannot keep their eyes from wavering, but his were calm and firm. Suddenly he leaned over and, gently removing my hand from the wheel, he said: "Little woman, the day is too beautiful for you to waste God's sunshine by remaining indoors. Let us go to the Museum of Art." I replied: "You forget, Mr. Ballard, I am employed by your mother and sister to work on their dresses of last year." "Oh," he responded, "I have already told them my intentions, and they have acquiesced." We drove to the Museum in a four-wheeler, and there, in the presence of beautiful but inanimate things, we talked of art and life. We left at such an hour that I could be home at the usual time, so as not to arouse father's suspicions, and Billy

Mrs. Ballard (*Ethel Lynn*)Ursula (*Beth Martin*)

MRS. BALLARD: Now, Ursula dear, don't forget your walk. The Grecian bend, which is fashionable at present, starts from the waist.

accompanied me as far as the drug store around the corner. His last words were: "You haven't finished your work on mother's blue *peau de soie*, so I shall see you again to-morrow."

Meantime Sam has succeeded in exciting Mr. Dover, who comes out to reprimand his daughter.

DOVER: I don't like it! I know them—those rich men with their sneaky ways! No

good can come of this. He does not mean well.

ELSIE: I'm sure you're mistaken, daddy. His influence is very beneficial. It educates me to work there. He wants to improve my mind. You see, daddy, he thinks I'm too intelligent to sit at a sewing machine all day.

DOVER: In that he is right. If they hadn't stolen my invention—those rich men—you would be living on Fifth Avenue and driving in your own carriage on Broadway.



Mrs. Ballard

Rosamond Gill

Elsie Dover

ROSAMOND: Oh, you're getting a new dress! How exciting! How pretty it is—just like the one you looked so well in last year!

ELSIE: Look, daddy, he gave me this today. (*Shows book.*) A man doesn't give a girl fine literature if he means harm to her, does he? It's the latest novel by George Eliot.

SAM: George Eliot! *His* books are no good. A year from now he won't be heard of.

MARY: Sam used to be in the book business—he knows what he's talking about. (*SAM glowers at her.*)

DOVER: I think it best that you do not go to that house again. These books and other things are honey to catch flies.

ELSIE: But, daddy, I earn good money there, and we need it.

DOVER: That is true—that is true. If I could be sure— That man and his sneaky ways—

ELSIE: But he hasn't any sneaky ways. You mustn't judge everybody by Sam.

DOVER: We shall see. (*Mysteriously*) I have a plan. We will soon know. (*Exits into house, disregarding SAM's protests.*)

ELSIE: You see, Sam, you don't always get your own way.

SAM (*mounting wheel*): I'm not through yet. When Sam Robinson makes up his mind to get a thing, he gets it! You'll marry me yet, whether you like it or not. (*Rides off.*)

MARY: Good riddance to bad rubbish! Let's forget Sam Robinson. Tell us more about Mr. Ballard.

ELSIE (*sighing, and settling down to a new story*): He's tall and handsome, and he has the most beautiful manners—

The Ballards, who seem so magnificent to Elsie, are in reality striving hard to keep up appearances—at least until Billy's sister, Ursula, shall be safely engaged to the distinguished Mr. Rupert Hancock. Mr. Hancock is also extremely wealthy, one of his hobbies being the study of sociology. Billy is a failure as a money maker, and in their straitened circumstances his mother and sister are obliged to stay in town during the summer, pretending to prefer it, and to have their gowns made over.

In the drawing-room, Mrs. Ballard and Ursula are bemoaning Billy's recent melancholy and his lack of business ability, when Rosamond Gill is announced. Rosamond is a friend of Ursula's, a gay, spoiled society girl, who has been leading Billy along by the light in her eyes, but whose parents object to so poor a son-in-law. Billy fancies himself hopelessly in love, and Rosamond revels in the romantic situation.

Chattering breezily of her day's shopping expedition to town, of the rising prices of shoes—for a pair of which she has just had to pay three dollars—of Ursula's preferred summer in town, the latest schottische, and other girlish interests, Rosamond

is obviously awaiting Billy's entrance. Elsie enters with Ursula's dress, which is ready for a fitting.

ROSAMOND: Oh, you're getting a new dress! How exciting! How pretty it is—just like the one you looked so well in last year! Try it on and let me see.

URSULA (*seeing no way out of it*): All right. Excuse me. (*Goes out.*)

MRS. BALLARD: Miss Dover is a very clever seamstress—quite remarkable, considering her age. We both prefer her to the more fashionable dressmakers. (BILLY, a good-looking youth of twenty-four, much depressed, enters.) Good evening, William. (*Kissing him*) Wasn't it sweet of Rosamond to visit us?

ROSAMOND: Father just bought a new victoria and a team of horses, so I came up to town to look at them. He's coming for me in a little while, and we're going to have dinner at the Fifth Avenue Hotel. Isn't that exciting?

MRS. BALLARD: I'll run in and see how the dress looks. Come to Ursula's room before you leave, Rosamond, dear. (*Exits.*)

ROSAMOND (*cheerfully*): Well, Billy, how are you?

BILLY (*dramatically*): How can you ask?

ROSAMOND: I've been thinking about you a lot, Billy—and hoping that we were still good friends. Aren't you glad to see me?

BILLY (*despondently*): Does one enjoy seeing the dagger that made the wound?

ROSAMOND: Oh, what an unkind thing to say! Have I hurt, Billy? I'm sure I didn't intend to. I suppose, if you feel that way



Mary Kennedy as Rosamond Gill, and Eva Le Gallienne as Elsie Dover.





BILLY (Sidney Blackmer): I am not blaming you. But you did lay your hands on top of mine, and you knew your hair was blowing in my face, yet you let it blow.

about me, you don't care for me any more at all?

BILLY: That's the curious part of it. It hasn't affected my love for you in the least. If you were a man, and I had the same thoughts about you, I'd hate you. As it is — *(Breaks off with a hopeless gesture.)*

ROSAMOND *(softly)*: Go on.

BILLY: Why squeeze the last drop of blood from an aching heart? You know already the words I would speak. Why have you come here? Like Nero, who fiddled while Rome burned, you wish to gloat over the ruins of what once was a man.

ROSAMOND: Oh, Billy, how you misjudge me! Why, I wouldn't hurt you for the whole world. If I've made you the least teeny-weeny bit unhappy, it hasn't been my fault.

BILLY *(with quick gallantry)*: I am not blaming you. Rather, a thousand times, I would blame myself. But you did lay your hands on top of mine, and you knew your hair was blowing in my face, yet you let it blow. I was a poor, conceited fool! As if

you would leave your life of luxury to come to me! I, who can give you no horses, no carriages, no —

ROSAMOND: Don't you dare say I am mercenary!

BILLY *(qualifying)*: Not you—your parents. I shall tell you something, Rosamond. You must promise not to cry out. That will be your first impulse, but you mustn't. *(Pointing dramatically to a gas jet)* Do you see that gas jet? There are three of them in my room. If I turned them on without applying a match, and then lay down in bed, with the windows shut and the keyholes stuffed— *(Claps his hand over ROSAMOND'S mouth as she starts to scream.)*

ROSAMOND: Oh, Billy, you mustn't think of such a thing!

BILLY: Why not? I am a failure. This world is no place for such as I.

ROSAMOND: But your mother loves you, and Ursula loves you, and —

BILLY: Let us face the facts frankly. They love me, you say. But my living deprives

them of much that is good in the world. You can see how my death would help, for my share in father's estate would revert to them. It would enable them to live much better than they do, to go to the country in the summer, to go to fashionable dressmakers instead of having a seamstress come to the house, and— As for me, what have I to live for?

ROSAMOND (*sniffing*): This is terrible! It's awful! Oh, Billy, it won't be my fault, will it?

BILLY: You cannot be blamed, for you did not know. I had a glimpse of Heaven, and then it was snatched away.

ROSAMOND: It will always—always—be on my conscience. I shouldn't have let you fall in love with me.

BILLY: What could you do? I was a poor, blind fool. I was a mouse, attracted by a piece of cheese, and did not see the trap. (*She stares.*) I beg your pardon, Rosamond. That was a very poor metaphor.

While Billy escorts the tearful, excited Rosamond to her father's carriage, Elsie enters surreptitiously, extracts a book from the book-case, opens to a familiar page, and begins to read aloud, fairly reveling in the sickly sentimentality.

ELSIE (*reading*): "Do not dream of it, Mr. Witherbee," she answered in great indignation. "I would never touch a farthing of yours. Do you suppose I would accept help of a financial kind from any man?" "And must I do nothing to soften the hardships of your life?" asked Ronald Witherbee." (*Billy enters. Elsie, absorbed, does not hear him.*) "It is not a hard life," replied

Guinevere Middleton. 'It is the life of thousands of girls in this great but wicked city.'" (*Starting at sight of BILLY*) Oh!

BILLY (*dryly*): I am sorry to interrupt a conversation between you and your friends.

ELSIE (*flushed*): It—it was all in the book. I didn't think I'd be caught. I'll put it back. (*RUPERT HANCOCK enters.*) I—I've put it back. (*Exits.*)

BILLY: Good evening, Rupert.

RUPERT: Hello, Billy, my lad. Who's the girl?

BILLY: I don't know. Mother's seamstress, I think.

RUPERT: Very pretty. Wonder if she'd care to sew in our house?

BILLY (*lost in thought, a lighted match in his hand*): I wonder where I shall be next month?

RUPERT: You can hardly expect me to know. Just saw Rosamond Gill driving away. Good family. Made their money this generation, but good family just the same. (*Maid enters with letter for BILLY, which he reads with increasing perplexity.*) "Meet me at the reservoir, on the Forty-second Street side." Is that what she says? Two to one, she's a trapeze performer. at Tony Pastor's, or a ballet girl from Niblo's Garden.

BILLY (*reading*): "I shall call on you at seven. My daughter's future is at stake."

RUPERT: By Jove! That's different. Got into a pickle, hey? Who's the girl?

BILLY: I have no idea. The letter is signed "Michael Dover." I seem to have heard the name Dover, but I can't remember where.

RUPERT: They've a way of changing their names when it suits their purpose. But I understand now why you've been so melancholy. Sounds like blackmail to me.



ELSIE (to BILLY): You would have given me this today if father hadn't written that letter. See! It sits on the edge of the mantelpiece.

BILLY: But I don't know any such girl! (Sighs.) If I only did! Then, perhaps, I could think of something besides my grief. (More depressed than ever, he leaves the room.)

Rupert is greeted effusively by Mrs. Ballard and Ursula. Presently Rosamond, greatly agitated, comes rushing back to the house to warn Mrs. Ballard of Billy's threat. Alarmed, Mrs. Ballard talks the matter over with Rupert.

RUPERT: I believe I can furnish a clew to the mystery. Just now, before you came into the room, Billy received a letter from some man in which he referred to his daughter's future. One doesn't refer to such a delicate thing as a woman's future except to a person who is interested in it.

MRS. BALLARD: How clever you are, Rupert! I was telling Ursula to-day how fortunate she is—your company gives her such an opportunity to improve her mind. (Suddenly recalling herself) But, Billy!

RUPERT: He pretended not to know what the letter referred to, but he would do that in any event. I forget the writer's name, but that she is in a lower station of life, we may take for granted. And from the tone of her father's letter I believe they are capable of causing trouble. At any rate, Mrs. Ballard, I am certain the girl Billy is involved with is what you would term an inferior.

MRS. BALLARD (groaning): He couldn't be! It's impossible! (A new fear seizing her) Good Heavens! Rupert, you—you are

broad-minded. You don't think badly of our whole family because Billy made one mistake?

RUPERT: As you say, I am broad-minded. MRS. BALLARD (sighing with relief): Ah! I shall speak to William at once. Something must be done.

RUPERT: I should be very careful, Mrs. Ballard. Billy is sensitive. You must not let him realize you know of this.

MRS. BALLARD: Then what shall I do? You are so clever, Rupert—I place myself in your hands.

RUPERT: You must suggest his going away. You see, if he does so, he will be out of their clutches long enough to think things over. If, on the other hand, he remains here, it will indicate that he is in love with the girl. Above all, don't let him know your suspicions.

With unwonted tenderness, Mrs. Ballard interviews her son and urges him to take a vacation. The words of a maid, entering to say that Miss Dover has finished her work for the day, and awaits in-

structions for the morrow, attract Billy's attention.

BILLY: Is the seamstress' name "Dover"?

MRS. BALLARD: Yes—why?

BILLY: Peculiar name, that's all.

MRS. BALLARD: Why, William, how nervous you are! At least promise you will think over what I have said.

Before Elsie leaves the house Billy,



ELSIE (memorizing): "Do not dream of it, Mr. Witherbee," she said in great indignation."



MARY: Is it the book about Guinevere Middleton and Ronald Witherbee?

ELSIE: That's it. I've memorized part of it already.

with the letter in his hand, confronts her. She is frightened and confused. One glance at the letter and its signature tells her what it means.

ELSIE (*trembling*): It—it's all a mistake. Mr. Ballard, what—what do you think of a liar?

BILLY (*sternly*): I dislike them. Is your father a liar?

ELSIE: He's the most truthful man in the world! Mr. Ballard, I am probably the biggest liar in the world. My father thinks you're in love with me.

BILLY: *What?* May I ask how your father gained such an impression? Especially as you and I, up to the present, have never exchanged a single word?

ELSIE: Oh, yes we have! It wasn't much, but I remember it. One day last week you

came into your mother's room while I was at the sewing machine, and you said, "Excuse me, miss, but do you know where Mrs. Ballard is?" And I answered, "I think she's lying down." That conversation gave me the whole idea. (*Dreamily*) That day you gave me some flowers—lilacs—that I bought from the Greek on Third Avenue. They only cost ten cents, but they meant a great deal to me.

BILLY (*scornfully*): Are you mad?

ELSIE: Last Monday you gave me a book about music. You felt that I ought to know about such things, and it was a shame that I should spend all my time at a sewing machine. And yesterday, in order to cultivate my taste for literature, you gave me the latest novel by George Eliot.

BILLY (*furious*): I did nothing of the kind!

ELSIE: But how do you know? You weren't there. (*He stares at her, too amazed*

*to reply.*) And that isn't all. Look! (*Draws from her pocket a small, cheap statuette.*) You would have given me this to-day if father hadn't written that letter. See! It sits on the edge of the mantelpiece.

BILLY: That cheap little Cupid!

ELSIE (*grandly*): It isn't the value of the gift that counts—it's the spirit in which it is made. That's what I told Sam when you gave me the geranium.

BILLY: I judge from your last remark that your father is not the only person who knows of my infatuation.

ELSIE: I had to tell Sam because it stops his making love to me. And Mary and Silvia—two poor little girls who live around the corner—they love you from my description. (*BILLY is pleased.*) They may have whispered it to some of the neighbors—one or two have dropped hints—

BILLY (*angry again*): No doubt.

ELSIE: Oh, I didn't mean to tell anybody but Sam and the girls—really I didn't! Sam brought daddy into it. It's terrible—I know it is! But, oh, Mr. Ballard, you don't know how wonderful dreams are! All the people I know are so busy that they only have time to dream at night, and there's nothing *real* about such dreams. Now, daddy will know the truth and I'll have to marry Sam just because I can't stand scolding. (*She turns away, badly shaken.*)

BILLY (*more gently*): This Sam, whoever he is—you don't want to marry him? (*She shakes her head.*) Of course you realize how ridiculous this whole thing is? I say, you realize—Oh, turn around and look at me! Now, tell me *this*. Out of a whole wide world of men, why did you choose *me* as your victim?



BILLY: The only thing that could drive me away from you is to have you ask me to go.



Mrs. Ballard

Mr. Dover (George H. Tracer)

DOVER: I have been treated as grievously as you, madam. They told me my daughter was treated as a guest at your house.

ELSIE (*smiling*): You admire me for that, at any rate, don't you?

BILLY: Admire you!

ELSIE: For my judgment. You *are* fascinating. You're young and handsome, and you have beautiful manners—I told that to all of them. (*The bell rings.*) There's daddy!

BILLY: He is on time. I shall dispose of this matter very quickly.

ELSIE (*sighing*): Yes, I suppose you will. You despise people who tell lies, don't you, Mr. Ballard? (*Turns away, murmuring*) I wish I had chosen the other man.

BILLY (*wheeling suddenly*): What other man? What are you talking about?

ELSIE: I had the choice between you and him, and I decided on you because— Well, he isn't as handsome as you, but he's very chivalrous.

BILLY: Well, this affair will soon be settled.

ELSIE: It will *never* be settled, Mr. Ballard. (*Tragically*) No matter what may happen to me, I will always know that you despise me. That will be the deepest wound of all. (*Her head droops, and BILLY controls an impulse to go to her.*)



BILLY (*gruffly*): You should be ashamed of yourself—a pretty young girl like you!

ELSIE (*smiling through tears*): Oh, Mr. Ballard, do you really think I'm pretty? That, too, is something I will never forget. (*BILLY writhes. MRS. DOVER is shown in, and ELSIE is asked to wait in the next room.*)

DOVER: You wonder why I am here, sir? I can explain very quickly. I am a careful father, sir.

BILLY: You're quite right to be careful, sir.

DOVER: Yes, Elsie is very pretty. And beauty attracts the unscrupulous. But it was not her beauty I came to discuss. Years ago some rich men stole my invention—an invention which would have enabled Elsie to live in luxury. I don't trust rich men. You have been kind to Elsie, but I cannot trust you.

BILLY: Don't let *that* worry you. People think we're rich, but we aren't.

DOVER: You are rich compared with Elsie, and when a rich man pays attentions to a poor girl, it is time her father investigated.

BILLY (*hotly*): So you think my friendship with your daughter is that kind of an affair?

DOVER: Elsie is a good girl—good and pure and sweet! But a young girl sometimes loses her head. She thinks you handsome and brilliant. When a girl says ridiculous things, there is danger. Sam Robinson, who wishes to marry her, is a man of her own class. He is a son of a good friend. I would not oppose her marrying him.

BILLY: She doesn't share your enthusiasm.

DOVER: That is partly your fault. When a rich man is kind to his mother's dressmaker you can—

BILLY: This has gone far enough! Did your daughter ever intimate that I made an improper advance to her?

DOVER: On the contrary, she insists that you are the soul of chivalry.

BILLY (*pleased*): Go on, sir.

DOVER: But I know rich men and their underhand methods. Mr. Ballard, I am here to satisfy myself that there is no improper motive in your friendship with my daughter.

BILLY: On that score you may feel perfectly secure. The only thing between your daughter and myself is a yawning chasm.

DOVER: You mean the social discrepancy?

BILLY (*angry*): I mean nothing of the kind. Social distinctions are ridiculous. If I cared for your daughter and wished to be friendly with her, the fact that she happens to be my mother's seamstress wouldn't make the slightest difference. But as it is—

DOVER: Mr. Ballard, I withdraw all opposition to your friendship. (*BILLY gasps.*) There is only one reservation I feel bound to make. This friendship may interfere with her fondness for Sam Robinson. In that case, I should not be pleased.

BILLY: Sam Robinson! Look here, Mr. Dover, it's none of my business, but making a girl marry a man she doesn't care for is a contemptible thing to do.

DOVER: I am thinking of her welfare, her safety. How can I feel secure regarding my daughter while she accepts attentions from men I do not know?

BILLY: Do you think the men you happen to know are the only decent ones in the world? You old-fashioned people have the most evil minds! Why, you came here to-day prepared to find me a Mephistopheles merely because your daughter told you I had been kind to her! Can't a man be fond of a girl without intending to do her harm?

DOVER (*grandly*): Mr. Ballard, you have convinced me! I realize you are fond of Elsie in a proper, commendable way.

BILLY (*confused*): I—I— All I said was it's an outrage to make a girl marry a man she doesn't love.

DOVER: I have already taken a great deal of your time, Mr. Ballard. If you will call Elsie, I shall tell her in your presence that I withdraw all my former objections.

BILLY (*desperately*): Wait a moment! Let me think. (*ELSIE enters, with lowered head, trembling from head to foot.*)

DOVER: Elsie, Mr. Ballard has told me the truth. He is a gentleman in spite of his wealth, and I have no objection to your knowing him. (*She is taken aback, and starts to giggle.*)

BILLY (*furious*): Don't giggle!

DOVER: You're quite right, sir. It's a most unbecoming habit. Elsie, dear, since you and Mr. Ballard are such good friends, it would be gracious of you to ask him to call.

ELSIE: But, daddy, I—

DOVER: My daughter thinks, perhaps, that our home is too humble. But, sir, I should be pleased to have you come.

ELSIE: Of course I'd be awfully glad. Maybe—maybe you'll come to-night? We could sit on the stoop and talk. There's always a breeze on our street.

BILLY: One moment. There is something, sir, I feel you ought to know—

ELSIE (*quickly drawing DOVER to the door*): Come along, dear. (*To BILLY*) We're always through dinner by eight. Don't be late. I'll be waiting for you. (*Exits.*)

BILLY (*dazed*): Well!



BILLY: I don't believe a word of all this, You're fond of *me-me!* That's why you made up those stories, and that's why we've become such friends. Elsie—Elsie, dear——

A week later, and Billy has been a caller at the Dover home exactly seven times—a fact that has aroused an enormous interest in Silvia and Mary, as well as the whole neighborhood. No longer

depressed, but gay and buoyant, he is a transformed Billy. By his interest in Mr. Dover's inventions, as well as his chivalry and kindness to Elsie, he has quite won the old man's heart. Craftily,

Sam Robinson watches the affair and, after a little spying on his own account, reports his suspicions to Elsie's father. Billy, arriving at the moment, is sternly asked for an explanation.

BILLY (*uncomfortable*): Ask Elsie, sir. Her memory is so much better than mine.

DOVER: It will not be a great tax on your memory, sir. I am informed that you and Elsie met this afternoon and went to Del-

SAM: Are you speaking of Rupert Hancock, the millionaire?

BILLY: Yes. Do you know him?

SAM: I don't know him, but I know about him. His family owns a lot of property on Park Avenue, above Forty-second Street. I advised 'em to sell. Property in that part of town will never be worth anything. I used to be in the real-estate business and I know what I'm talking about. Look here—they're swells, ain't they?



Ursula

Rupert Hancock (Gilbert Douglas)

RUPERT: Have you missed me, dearest? It's been more than an hour.

mónico's, on Fourteenth Street. You both left the house, but at separate times, and met by appointment around the corner. Such a method of meeting suggests that your family knew nothing about it. If Mrs. Ballard has no objection to your friendship, why do you find it necessary to meet surreptitiously?

ELSIE: It's like this, daddy. There's a certain Mr. Hancock who is very attentive to Billy's sister and who is at the house a great deal. Well, Mr. Hancock and Miss Ursula like to go wherever we do, but Billy and I like to be alone. So to-day Billy pretended he was going to Barnum's circus, and I said I was coming home.

ELSIE: One of the best families.

SAM: And he wants to go around with you? Oh, say! You'll hear from me again! (*Exits.*)

BILLY (*alone with ELSIE*): That story you told your father—what a magnificent fib that was! He believes that my people know about our going around together, doesn't he?

ELSIE: If he thought they didn't know it, he would forbid my seeing you. That's why I had to have lunch with all of you.

BILLY: Oh, we had lunch together, did we? My memory is very faulty. Did something transpire, perhaps, that I ought to remember?

ELSIE (*airily*): Nothing of any consequence. You asked me to go driving next Sunday in a barouche.

BILLY: Good! We'll do it.

ELSIE: I can't. I have another engagement.

BILLY: Are you telling the truth about that?

ELSIE: No.

BILLY (*joyfully*): Then you will go driving with me?

ELSIE: No. Because you haven't told your mother and sister.

BILLY: I haven't told them because I didn't think it necessary. (*With deep feeling*) You don't know what this friendship has done for me. I was on the brink of despair—everything was black. And you were the sunshine that sifted into my soul and turned the night into day. You think I'm afraid to tell my people, do you? Well, consider it done.

ELSIE: They won't like it. I'm only a seamstress. They'll try to break up our friendship.

BILLY: The only thing that could drive me away from you is to have you ask me to go. Nothing else! (*ELSIE looks at him, her eyes filled with gratitude and affection.*) But here's something I've wanted to ask you for a long time. What made you invent those stories when you did?

ELSIE: Move away and I'll tell you. When I was a little girl I once asked mother to buy me a horse and carriage. Think of it! We had hardly enough to eat, and I wanted a horse and carriage! Mother lifted me up and said to me: "Darling, when you haven't got a thing, it doesn't help to cry about it. Just imagine it's yours, and that's almost as good as having it."

BILLY (*his eyes devouring her*): By Jove! This means that you invented our friendship because it was something you wanted?

ELSIE (*shaking her head*): This was altogether different. This happened because I was working in your house at the time.

BILLY: And you used to see me and think how nice it would be if we knew each other. You're a romantic girl—

ELSIE: That's it; I'm very, very romantic. Every girl is, I guess. Only, some keep their romance closed up in here (*touching her heart*) and after a while it dies, like a flower that never feels the sun. Others expose their natures to the sun, and let the air of life blow upon them— (*Catching herself*) It wasn't you that awakened the romance in me. You won't be angry, Billy, if I tell you the truth?

BILLY (*stunned*): Proceed.

ELSIE: Please don't be hurt, Billy. I know how dreadfully vain men are, but—but this is different. You see I've never told you about Ronald. Ronald Witherbee is his name, and he was awfully fond of me. But Ronald is wealthy and father didn't approve of him. Yet, in spite of his riches, he had touched my girlish heart. (*Declaiming romantically*) "Under the interlacing boughs we would sit, my fingers employed upon some piece of artistic embroidery, while Ronald Witherbee read aloud to me. I thrilled in the scenes of dramatic grandeur and trembled in the moments of fiery passion." We used to meet without father knowing. He gave me the geranium on the window sill, he bought me the book by George Eliot, he took me to the Museum of Art—

BILLY (*bewildered*): Good heavens! I thought I did those things.

ELSIE: I said it was you when it was really Ronald. Father wouldn't allow me to meet him, so I tried to be as truthful as I could. I told father what happened, but pretended it was some other man. You seemed as harmless as anybody—

BILLY: Harmless! I'll show you whether I'm harmless! Where is this man now?

ELSIE: He went away. He writes to me every day, and of course he'll come back. He's sorry for what he said. He said something that hurt me. Knowing father and I were poor, he begged me to accept his help.

BILLY: The insulting ass!

ELSIE (*again romantic*): "Do not dream of it, Mr. Witherbee," I answered in great indignation. "Do you think I would accept help of a financial kind from you or any other man?" "And must I do nothing to soften the hardships of your life?" asked Ronald Witherbee. "It is not a hard life—it is the life of thousands of girls in this great, but wicked city," I answered.

BILLY: I seem to have heard something like that before. Look here—are you fibbing again?

ELSIE: Do not profane a beautiful romance with unworthy suspicions. And now remember your promise to call on Silvia's brother. I'll tell you more when you come back.

BILLY: Do you promise to tell me the truth? I won't be long. He wants to talk about Grant's third term. (*Exits.*)

Meantime Sam has been busy on a trip to another part of town. Elsie and her father are amazed to receive a call from Mrs. Ballard and Ursula, whom



Eva Le Gallienne as *Elsie*, Sidney Blackmer as *Billy*, and Mary Kennedy as *Rosamond*.

Sam has escorted to their door. With dignity Mr. Dover receives the aristocratic ladies and, when he learns that he has been deceived by Elsie as to Mrs. Ballard's knowledge of the affair, he promises that the friendship between his daughter and her son shall end at once. Elsie, too, is made to promise that she will see Billy no more, and that he shall not be told of his mother's visit. Then, as the haughty lady departs, she informs Elsie that her services will no longer be required.

DOVER (*sinking into a chair*): The humiliation of it! The terrible disgrace!

SAM (*briskly*): No occasion to take it like that, Mr. Dover. I'm here. Nobody has to know about it if you take the right course. Let Elsie marry me. I'm not a rich man, but everybody knows I'm bright and bound to succeed. The day is past, anyhow, when

people can make big fortunes like the Vanderbilts and Goulds. Twenty years from now there won't be a millionaire in the country. I know what I'm talking about.

ELSIE (*very miserable*): Ask him to leave, daddy.

DOVER: I would like to be alone with Elsie. But before you go, I may say that I will do my best to persuade Elsie to accept you. There is every reason to believe that she will.

SAM: That's the way to talk! (*To ELSIE*) Didn't I tell you that I get what I go after? (*Exits.*)

DOVER: What made you tell all these falsehoods? I can no longer trust you.

ELSIE: I wonder if they're really falsehoods? Daddy, was mother romantic when she was a girl? (*Eagerly*) She dreamed, didn't she? Not like other people, but beautiful dreams while the sun was shining. They seemed just as real to her as if they had all happened. Well, daddy, that's how it was about Billy and me.







DOVER: If this is all true, it seems you care a great deal for him. I cannot trust you to send him away.

ELSIE: Yes, you can, daddy. I may have inherited mother's romantic nature, but I've also inherited your pride. And what happened just now shows me what a fool I've been.

DOVER: But you still care for him?

ELSIE (*laughing*): Not a bit. It was all make-believe from the first. You heard what his mother said about that other girl? I knew about her all the time. I hear him coming, daddy. Please go. (*DOVER exits. In high spirits, BILLY enters. ELSIE, erect and resolute, avoids his eyes.*)

ELSIE: Sam was here. He brought me a letter—from Ronald.

BILLY: Where is the letter?

ELSIE: I burned it; I was afraid father might find it. He said I should have courage—he is coming back to claim me as his wife. (*With a touch of bitterness*) He isn't in love with a girl in his own set. He's in love with me. (*Lightly*) So now, you see, this is the end of our friendship. Ronald is terribly jealous, and he would never forgive me if I went around with another man.

BILLY (*scornfully*): Doesn't trust you very much, does he?

ELSIE: I don't think people ever trust one another when they're in love.

BILLY: Don't you? Well, if I were Ronald—it's a damn silly name anyhow—I'd trust you anywhere. You mean, then, I'm never to see you again?

ELSIE: I'm afraid that's it. I must do as he asks.

BILLY: It can't be! I won't have it! I don't believe a word of all this. You're fond of me—me! That's why you made up those stories, and that's why we've become such friends. You're so in the habit of fibbing that you simply can't tell the truth. (*Desperately, flinging his arms about her*) Elsie—Elsie—dear—

ELSIE (*pushing him away*): So that's what you think of me! I might have known it! You wouldn't act that way toward a girl in your own set.

BILLY: I forgot myself. Forgive me—please forgive me! All this you have told me is true? You love this man—and you never wish to see me again?

ELSIE: I can't. It wouldn't be right.

BILLY: Very well. Before I go I must thank you for what you have done for me. Before I met you I was the most miserable man in the world. Something had happened that made me utterly wretched. Then I met

you, and gradually things changed. The very fact that you chose me to weave your stories about seemed like a summons calling me to live again. For I must be of use—if I were capable of inspiring such emotions. Emotions! (*Laughs hollowly.*) I was the cat's-paw that pulled the chestnuts out of the fire for some other man! (*ELSIE is silent, struggling with tears.*) For a while I thought— (*Utters an exclamation and exits.*)

ELSIE (*with a sob*): Billy! Billy!

At last Ursula wears a diamond ring from Tiffany's.

MRS. BALLARD: How delighted William will be when he learns of your engagement!

URSULA: And now that impertinent Miss Dover is out of the way, Billy may be more sensible.

MRS. BALLARD: We nipped that disgraceful affair just in time. When I learned that William was having an affair with some girl in a lower station in life, do you know what I feared? Think of such a thing coming to Rupert's ears! Thank Heaven he will never know! But I was going to ask about Rosamond's letter. What were her precise words regarding William?

URSULA: She says she will be here about noon. (*Reads.*) "Your brother's mysterious behavior on my last visit fills me with grave fears. I thought of it all last night while I danced at Mrs. Long's beautiful ball."

MRS. BALLARD: Ursula, it is fate! This may be the solution for William.

URSULA: But she didn't want him when he wanted her.

MRS. BALLARD: Conditions have changed. Thanks to your beauty and the careful education I have given you, William will soon be a connection of the Hancocks. Don't you realize what a difference that will make to Rosamond and her family? (*The bell rings.*) I suppose that's Rosamond now.

When Billy comes in, Mrs. Ballard contrives to leave him alone in the drawing-room with Rosamond, who is excited over the news of Ursula's engagement. Billy is depressed again, and wears a petulant, woebegone expression.

ROSAMOND: How happy they are! (*Sighing*) What a beautiful love affair they have had! Don't you think so, Billy?

BILLY: Rather commonplace, I should say—just like other love affairs.

ROSAMOND (*smiling self-consciously*): Bill-ee! I've been dreadfully worried about you. Ever since our last talk, I've kept think-

ing of the terrible things you said. Oh, Billy, you don't know how I've suffered! (He looks deeply into her eyes.) Why do you look at me like that?

BILLY (in a strange tone): Some people compose stories that are so true to life you begin to live them yourself. Others compose stories that have no reality at all. I suppose it's a gift.

ROSAMOND: What are you talking about? You act awful peculiar. (Coquettishly) Aren't you glad to see me, Billy?

BILLY: Yes. Because now I know. Until I saw you again I couldn't be sure.

ROSAMOND: You think I acted like a beast, don't you?

BILLY (wearily): I have forgotten. Years have rolled by since then.

ROSAMOND: Forgotten! Why, it's just over a week!

BILLY: Through Ursula the family is raised to a high social position. My brother-in-law-to-be makes me a splendid business offer—

ROSAMOND (significantly): Father and mother will be glad to hear about it. And that will make a great difference between us. It was their fault that everything happened as it did. I've always been very fond of you. (BILLY is silent.) Oh, what stupid things men are!

BILLY: Love is a tender thing. It is like the fledgling bird—bruise its wings and it cannot fly. (With sudden vehemence) Have you ever read "Romeo and Juliet"?

ROSAMOND: Every girl has.

BILLY: In the first act *Romeo* was in love with *Rosalind*. But *Rosalind* was cold and unresponsive. Then he met *Juliet*. His heart leaped, his soul cried out for her. He loved her fragile beauty, her gentle voice—he loved the tired little hands that worked the sewing machine. He—

ROSAMOND: Are you crazy? *Juliet* never worked a sewing machine in her whole life! (With sudden suspicion) You're in love with somebody else!

BILLY: I'm talking of "Romeo and Juliet." He loved her sadness and her bravery, her mixture of common sense and romance. Above all, he loved her glorious fibs—the fibs that kept people wondering how much was plain make-believe and how much was her own sweet desire—

This is too much for Rosamond. She flings open the door and, furious and aggrieved, departs, while Billy goes sadly to his room. Mrs. Ballard is deeply perturbed to find Rosamond

gone, and her agitation increases when Elsie suddenly enters. Elsie has come to return a book loaned her by Billy, and to recover for her father a fishing rod—one of his precious inventions, which he has loaned to Billy. Much annoyed, Mrs. Ballard haughtily directs Elsie where to find the fishing rod, and orders her to leave at once. But Billy discovers Elsie's presence in the house and attempts to stop her mad rush for the door, loudly accusing her of taking what doesn't belong to her. In the uproar, while Mrs. Ballard wrings her hands, Rupert and Ursula appear.

RUPERT: What the deuce is the meaning of all this?

MRS. BALLARD (regaining her composure): This lady is our seamstress. There seems to be some absurd misunderstanding regarding a fishing rod. But don't let it disturb you, Rupert. Ursula, take Rupert inside again.

RUPERT (as Ursula drags him out): What can she want with a fishing rod? There's a problem in sociology for you!

MRS. BALLARD: William, what is the explanation of this extraordinary scene?

BILLY: The explanation is that your seamstress and I have been friends for some time. I have visited her every evening for more than a week. I should have told you before—only she was still working here—

MRS. BALLARD: But, William, it cannot be! You and a girl like that friends! It's preposterous! Think! If Rupert ever found out that Ursula's brother chooses his friends from that walk of life, it would spoil everything. Be generous, dear—think what it means to us!

Masterfully, Billy gets his distressed mother out of the room and turns to Elsie, who has been making futile and quite piteous efforts to escape.

BILLY: There's no use your trying to escape. I won't let you. I only want a word, and once you've answered me, you can take the fishing rod and go.

ELSIE: You're a brute.

BILLY: Sorrow has a brutalizing effect. Now, tell me: how did you know I was home at this hour?

ELSIE (gasping): I didn't. That's why I'm here now—because I thought you would be at business.

BILLY: All that you told me last night—is it true? About Ronald and everything?

ELSIE (*bravely*): It's all true. He will be back to-morrow.

BILLY: You're wonderful. You lie like an angel!

ELSIE: Please let me go. There is such a man, and I'm in love with him.

BILLY (*shaking his head and smiling*): You're at it again. Only, what motive you have in fibbing about this is beyond my comprehension. But, I tell you whatever it is, I'm going to find it out! (*Calls Mrs. BALLARD and the others into the room.*) Now, mother, will you kindly clear up this mystery? What have you said to Miss Dover that has caused her to break off our friendship?

MRS. BALLARD: Oh, Rupert, I wanted to keep this from you! But it isn't our fault, and whatever defects there may be in my son's character, I thank God my daughter has none of them! It's terrible! William has been lured into an awful affair with my seamstress.

RUPERT: So it was the seamstress! By Jove!

BILLY: My mother has put a wrong implication on the matter. There was nothing "awful" or "terrible" about it. Miss Dover is just as good in every way as my sister. And we were friends, just as you and Ursula were friends—nothing more.

MRS. BALLARD: It was on your account, Rupert, dear, that I tried to break it up. I know your principles and how sensitive you are. I know how much family and position mean to you. When we learned who the girl was, I said to Ursula: "This must be stopped—for Rupert's sake."

RUPERT (*to BILLY*): Do you love this girl?  
BILLY (*defiantly*): You bet I do! I wasn't sure of it until last night. When I thought I had lost her, I nearly went mad.

RUPERT: Those are the correct symptoms. (*Sternly*) Er—Mrs. Ballard, is it your custom, as a general thing, to assume a person's attitude without inquiring what it is? What makes you think I would come between two lovers?

MRS. BALLARD (*amazed and alarmed*): Why, Rupert—I know how—

RUPERT: You know nothing whatsoever of my views, ma'am, if I may be permitted to say so. I am both surprised and disappointed. (*To URSULA*) You knew of this plan to interfere with Billy's happiness?

URSULA: Oh, yes! Mamma and I—

MRS. BALLARD: Hush, dear!

RUPERT: You have attributed views to me which I should be ashamed to hold. You have offended me deeply, ma'am—both you

and Ursula. I have the honor to wish you both good day. (*Exits.*)

BILLY: Hurrah for Rupert!

MRS. BALLARD (*to URSULA, wildly*): Follow him! Talk to him! Make love to him—quick!

URSULA (*dashing out*): Oh, my heavens, if I should lose him!

MRS. BALLARD: Luncheon will be ready in a few minutes, Miss Dover. We would be delighted to have you join us.

ELSIE: I'm sorry, ma'am—

MRS. BALLARD: You ask her, William. She may reconsider if it comes from you.

ELSIE: I shall reconsider nothing.

BILLY (*to Mrs. BALLARD, angrily*): There! You see what your interference has done.

MRS. BALLARD: I did what seemed best. How should I know what Rupert meant by "sociology"? (*Elsie exits, unnoticed.*)

BILLY: Why didn't you inquire first? Good heavens! Where is she? (*Throwing open the window*) Elsie! Elsie!

MRS. BALLARD: William—the neighbors!

BILLY: Damn the neighbors! She's the only thing that counts.

MRS. BALLARD: But she won't come back—you heard what she said.

BILLY: But, mother, that why she's so wonderful—you can't believe a thing she says!

On the Dovers' steps, after a dozen futile trips, Billy at last finds Elsie and asks her to marry him. She refuses.

BILLY: Where have you been all afternoon? You couldn't have been with Ronald because he just arrived. Look—I've brought him to you. (*Opens book and reads.* ELSIE *gasps.*) "Do not dream of it, Mr. Witherbee," she answered in great indignation. "Do you think—?"

ELSIE (*her hands over her ears*): Stop!

BILLY (*closing book*): That finishes Ronald. (*Earnestly*) There is no one else. Then why not?

ELSIE: What of my pride?

BILLY: Why, it's triumphant! Even mother bows before it. Oh, my dear—

ELSIE (*softly*): I never heard you talk like this before.

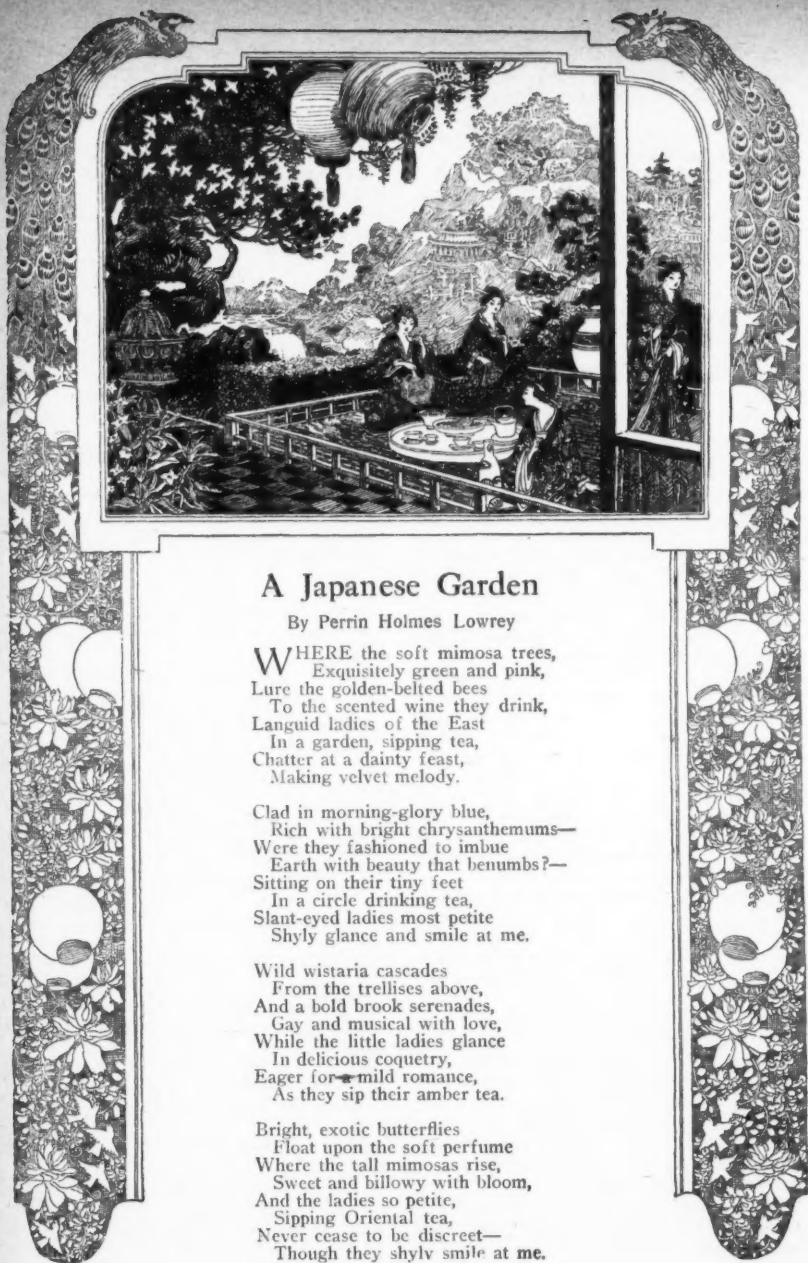
BILLY: I never felt like this before. Will you marry me?

ELSIE: How can you want me? I'm such a liar.

BILLY: I want you to lie to me all your life.

ELSIE: That'll be easy.

BILLY (*kissing her*): Lots of things are going to happen in the future that Sam doesn't expect!



## A Japanese Garden

By Perrin Holmes Lowrey

WHERE the soft mimosa trees,  
Exquisitely green and pink,  
Lure the golden-belted bees  
To the scented wine they drink,  
Languid ladies of the East  
In a garden, sipping tea,  
Chatter at a dainty feast,  
Making velvet melody.

Clad in morning-glory blue,  
Rich with bright chrysanthemums—  
Were they fashioned to imbue  
Earth with beauty that benumbs?—  
Sitting on their tiny feet  
In a circle drinking tea,  
Slant-eyed ladies most petite  
Shyly glance and smile at me.

Wild wistaria cascades  
From the trellises above,  
And a bold brook serenades,  
Gay and musical with love,  
While the little ladies glance  
In delicious coquetry,  
Eager for a mild romance,  
As they sip their amber tea.

Bright, exotic butterflies  
Float upon the soft perfume  
Where the tall mimosas rise,  
Sweet and billowy with bloom,  
And the ladies so petite,  
Sipping Oriental tea,  
Never cease to be discreet—  
Though they shyly smile at me.



# Long Live *the* Kink!



By Henry C. Vance

Author of "Somebody's Knockin' at Yo' Do',"

"One Miracle, C. O. D.," etc.

ILLUSTRATED BY E. W. KEMBLE

Perhaps the most delectable and richly humorous of the darktown stories which Mr. Vance has yet written for SMITH'S. "The Marigold Bug" will appear next month.

**H**ABEAS CORPUS JACKSON and Delilah Gilyard stood on the front porch of the servants' house of Mayor Scott's estate. Delilah had pledged her troth to Habeas and the bridegroom-to-be had sworn by all that was holy and otherwise to protect her always in their pilgrimage adown the pathway of life. The moon, as mellow as a luscious pomegranate, beamed down upon this pair of dark-skinned lovers, and there was a chill in the autumnal air, but neither felt it, for their hearts had been warmed with a love that passeth all understanding.

Mr. Jackson eyed his fawn-colored derby lovingly.

"Yo' is gwine marry me, ain't yo', honey?"

And Delilah, looking proudly at her Samson, murmured softly:

"Cose'n Ah is, dollin'."

"An' us'll be as happy as a covey of lahks?"

"Ah suttin'ly hopes so." And one could tell by the tones of her voice that this hope was fervent.

"An' de pahson will tie de nuptiales' knot whut has evah been tied by man or beas'." Habeas prided himself on his knowledge of ceremonies—lodge and matrimonial.

But Delilah, interested a great deal more in appearances than in ceremonies, smiled happily.

"'Sides dat, we'll have heaps of flowahs in de chu'ch, won't we, deah?"

"Chu'ch? Flowahs? Say, woman, whut yo' think dis heah gwine be, a funeral?"

Miss Gilyard was rather abashed at this display of ignorance on the part of her dusky Romeo, and explained:

"No, silly boy, but dey has flowahs at weddin's de same as dey does at buryin's."

"Is yo' sho' 'bout dat?"

"Absotively! Yo' ain't think Ah wu'ks 'round quality white fokes all dese yeahs widout lettin' 'em learn me somethin', is yo'?"

Mr. Jackson scratched his receding forehead reflectively and allowed the keynote of sarcasm to creep into his tones:

"Dey ain't no use tellin' me 'bout quality white fokes, chile, as it can't be did. Doesn't Ah shave some of de highes' falooootin' white gen'mens in dis town?"

Delilah yielded partially to this.

"Yes," she admitted, "Ah guesses yo' does, but whut Ah's tryin' to tell yo' is dat when Mis' Kathleen ma'ied, she had worl's of flowahs, an' a li'l' gal dropped roses fo' em' to tromp on, an' Mis' Kathleen carried a bo'quet of lilies-of-de-valley. We is jus' got to have flowahs!" The emphasis of her remarks shattered what doubt remained in the mind of Habeas.

"An' we *will* have flowahs, sweetness! But when do dis heah weddin' come off?"





This placard popped into her vision at ten-thirty Saturday morning.

"Ah can't be bothered 'bout settin' no date."

"Den you'll let me 'cide when we is gwine be made one?"

"Dat's yo' priv'lege, sugah, if yo' doesn't make it too immediate." Delilah's victory in the matter of decorations had made her generous.

Habeas was wise in his generation and remembered something about a bird in the hand.

"But de soonah de bettah," he suggested. "How 'bout de twenty-secon' of nex' month?"

"Impossiblur!"

"How come?"

"De twenty-secon' is de wrong time of de moon."

"Whut de ole moon got to do with it?"

"Well, gran'paw woudn't of no mo' killed hawks at de wrong time of de

moon dan he would 'a' walked undah a laddah. My mamma tol' me dat." Evidently Delilah's memory had not been impaired by her loving heart.

"Ma'iage is diff'unt."

"It may be, but ma'iage is mo' se'ious dan killin' hawks." This went undisputed, and she continued, "If it pays to wait till de moon get right to save a li'l' fresh meat, it gwine pay mo' so to god against mat'monial disastah."

"Jus' as yo' says, dollin'. It shall evah be thusly. Yo' wud shall be law fo'evah an' internally."

"But even de law is sometimes violated." Delilah smiled at her dusky wooer. "'Cides, de cha'ity ball comes off on de twenty-secon', an' we wouldn't have a corporal's god at ouah weddin' wid dat 'trackshun gwine on."

"Den Ah let's yo' suit yo' own c'venience, honey." Mr.

Jackson smiled.

"Ah is jus' as anxious as whut yo' is," the lady assured him, "but we mus' be guided by wisdom." This reason was obviously good, and Habeas agreed.

Mr. Jackson picked up his fawn-colored derby, ran finger and thumb down the crease line of his bird's-eye-maple trousers, smoothed an imaginary wrinkle from a red-yellow-green knit cravat, took a near-gold watch from a pea-green velvet vest, glanced nonchalantly at the timepiece, and tripped from the porch all a-whistle, Delilah's eyes following him the while, for Habeas was good to look upon. He was the unchallenged dandy of the colored set, ultradapper and of rather small physique. Also, he bore the distinction of being the best negro barber of white patronage the town had ever developed. And Delilah had noted envy creeping

into the eyes of her girl friends as they had seen her slowly, but surely, luring Habeas nearer and nearer the marriage altar.

After the departure of her own true love, Delilah gazed happily into her mirror, and from the smile one would gather the appraisal had been satisfactory. She was of caramel-colored complexion, well-featured, plump, and really the peer of all of darktown's beauties, when it came to rare charm and pulchritudinous qualities. After studying her face smilingly for some few minutes, her face finally clouded. She clutched angrily at her hirsute adornment, lifted it bodily, and hurled it into the far corner of the room.

"False!" she snarled. "De only thing 'bout me whut's artfishul! It's a tohment to be fo'ced to weah a wig." She rolled her eyes heavenward. "Oh, how come de good Lawd of Bethlehem to run out of stratin' haih jus' as soon as he got to makin' us niggahs?" But no answer came.

Even such a successful matchmaker as Dan Cupid cannot figure upon the sudden whims of womanhood, however, for Delilah accepted Habeas' proposals of marriage on Friday night and on Saturday morning she met Doctor Alias Humphreys. Few of the colored citizenry of the town had become acquainted with the pompous Doctor Humphreys on the day that Delilah happened to a chance introduction. As a matter of fact, the introduction was self-inflicted. She had noticed the sign on Decatur Street:

"USE DOCTOR HUMPHREY'S KINK REMOVER AND MAKE YOUR HAIR GO STRAIGHT."

This placard popped into her vision at ten-thirty Saturday morning. At ten-thirty and one-half she had negotiated a flight of stairs and was entering Doctor Humphreys' studio. At ten-thirty-five she had learned in complete detail

the excellent qualities of the doctor's guaranteed hair straightener, and at ten-forty she had made the happy discovery that Doctor Humphreys' personal magnetism was as excellent as the boasted qualities of his antikink concoction. The doctor worked fast.

"Yo' haih restorah mus' be won'ful, doctah," murmured Delilah, after the eminent physician had finished an oration good enough to convince even the most pessimistic that a few bottles of his medicine would take the kinks out of a bed spring.

"It is dat, Mis' Gilyahd, an' th'u' dis scientific phenominaw Ah 'specks to benefac de cullud race."

"An' yo' is sho' it will 'liminate de kinks?" Delilah was not really doubtful, but she wanted renewed assurances, and was also fearful lest there should be a lull in the conversation.

Doctor Humphreys rose to his feet. He spread out one hand in a grandiloquent gesture.

"Ah's seen it tried. Ah's witnessed wid my own eyes dat formulah of mine change de zigzaggiest haih in de worl' an' make it as straight as de haih on a coconut."

"Oh, doctah, yo' mus' be won'ful! Yo' mus' be a reg'lah depahtment sto' of knowledge."

Hiding his light under a bushel was no part of the loquacious doctor's program.

"Miss Delilah, dat haih restorah is only one of mah many achievements."

Delilah's eyes opened wide in amazement.

"Yo' doesn't mean to tell me so, doctah?"

"Yes, Delilah, Ah is one of de talentedes' mortals ouah race has evah been blessed wid."

Miss Delilah Gilyard, beloved of Habeas, leaned forward invitingly.

"Tell me bout'n some of yo' othah 'chievements, doctah; Ah is interested."

"Well, Delilah, dear," continued the

doctor, "de fack is dat not, only is Ah de only man known to science, eyethah black or white, whut has evah invented a successful antikink medicine, but Ah is a great surgeon as well."

"Yo' doesn't tell me so." She was gazing admiringly at this intellectual giant. "A surgeon is what takes out yo' 'pedicitis an' pulls yo' tonsils, ain't he?"

"Yo' is got it right, deahes', but Ah is a mo' finished product dan whut yo' has in yo' min's eye. Dem ain't nothin' but secon'-lieutenant operashuns. Whut Ah puffohms is major operashuns." The doctor's language was reminiscent of his service in a labor battalion at St. Nazaire.

Delilah was impressed.

"Don' tell me yo' is dat famous!"

"Ah is, only mo' so. Ah once cut out a man's lights to remove a waht off'n a goiter, whut had growed on de linin' of his stummick, an' which projected toward his vertybray." Under this flow of eloquence and nonchalant use of medical terms, Delilah's eyes began to pop almost out of her head, and the doctor, noting the look of amazement, continued: "When he wuz walkin', dis mov'ment would stah de goiter to wigglin', an' de waht would come in contact wid de vertybray an' tickle it, which would give him a laughin' spell, an' he would become afflicted wid spinal gigititis. It looked lak de po' man gwine laugh hisse'f to death." The doctor was allowing a vivid imagination to run riot, and he might have become stuck then and there, had not Delilah ventured a query which allowed him to collect his thoughts working toward a climax.

"Den whut happened?" The maiden was growing excited over the narrative.

"Ah tuck out my lance, removes dat waht, put some of my special alum salve on de goiter, which swunk it up, an' to-day dat man weighs two hundud poun's, eats lak a hawg, an' is makin'

a livin' fo' his wife an' fo'teen chil-luns."

Delilah's eyes, having already expanded to saucerlike proportions, grew even larger, and her mouth, agape in alligator fashion, continued to stretch, she having reached a breathless and speechless state. Clearly Delilah held this great celebrity, now standing before her with thumbs propped in arm-holes of waistcoat, in absolute awe.

"My Gawd!" was all she could murmur.

"Yes, Ah sacrificed dis career in surgery to help mah race get out f'um de humiliashun of kinky haih," continued Doctor Humphreys in his most eloquent style. "Dis peccoliah twis' to de vegetation on ouah haid has been a eyesoah to de race since de days of Ham."

Delilah acquiesced, nodding her kinky head approvingly.

"It was won'ful of yo' to do it, doctah," she eagerly gulped in hero-worshipping tones.

"Call me Alias, deah," purred the doctor. "It soun's mo' infohmal. An' let me tell yo' dat when Ah gazes upon such beyootiful maidens as whut yo' is, Ah feels dat mah resuch is not been in vain." His rapturous gaze worked like a charm, and as Delilah bent forward he concluded: "It would have been a crime to allow a angel lak yo' to go th'u life f'um de cradle to de graveyahn wid dis awful handicap."

"An' yo' really thinks yo' can make mah haih straight, Alias?"

"Abs'lutely. Don't think, howevah, deah, dat it will straighten ovahnite. It might take six months, but if yo' follows de directions, Ah guarantees dat in a half a yeah yo' haih is gwine be puffedly straight."

"Wrop me up a bottle, Alias."

"Heah is one already wrop."

"An' how much do it set me back?"

"Not one iota." There was a generous touch in his voice and an admir-

ing gleam in his eyes, but his extensive vocabulary baffled Delilah.

"Whut yo' means by iota?"

"Nary a cent, dat's all."

"But yo' isn't in business fo' yo' health?"

"No, suhree, but Ah is gwine make yo' haih straight free."

"Oh, thank yo', Alias, deah."

"De pleasuh is all mine, an' if yo'll jus' come to see me sometimes, Ah'll feel dat Ah has been fully prepaid."

And Delilah departed, light of heart and minus memory of the infatuation she had once held for her fiancé, Habeas. Here was a man who stood out over a mere mortal of Habeas' type, like Mount Vesuvius over a smoking cigarette. Even Habeas of the fancy vests, the braided waistcoats, the candy-striped silk shirts, and

varicolored hatbands, could not hold a candle to the pompous doctor with his snug-fitting Prince Albert, those pearl-gray spats, that beaver hat of individual architecture.

The doctor was not Habeas' physical peer, to be sure, for he, too, was of semibantam structure, rather spindly of leg, and round of shoulder, but that dignified wearing apparel did the work. Where Habeas' style had merely had Delilah groggy, the pomp of Doctor Alias had proven a knockout.

Doctor Alias Humphreys' fame spread with the rapidity of an early morning blaze, particularly as ninety-seven per cent of Delilah's acquaintances spent fifty per cent of their earnings purchasing alleged kink-removing lotions. And, with one of their own kind possessing a guaranteed kink remover, Doctor Humphreys began to wax wealthy, Delilah began to wax enthusiastic, and Habeas began to wax exceeding hot under the collar.

There were sundry things in the doctor's favor, other than that he enjoyed an exalted position in the community. The leading medical light, through his many sales, was beginning to father quite a bank account. Habeas, on the other hand, was only a salaried employee, and could not afford thrice-a-week dinners



The belle of darktown was constantly in Doctor Alias' company, leaving Habeas to froth and fume vainly.

for his caramel-colored inamorata. Doctor Humphreys was more fortunate. As a result, the belle of darktown was constantly in Doctor Alias' company, leaving Habeas to froth and fume vainly.

Doctor Humphreys had embarked on a placid course for six months at least. After that period, shoaly channels might be encountered, for he had guaranteed cures within the half-year mark. Fully realizing the fake medicine would cause a storm of protest, when the truth was finally learned, the crafty Alias

had figured that in six months he would have a sufficiency of the filthy lucre to quit the town with a bank roll. Then he would buy mileage for some far-distant municipality, there to introduce to the uninitiated his wonderful medicine.

Consequently he was a busy man, filling bottles with his famous concoction and dealing them out to the faithful multitudes at one dollar per deal. Alias had always yearned to be the idol of some high-brown damsel's heart. His yearning had at last borne fruit.

The crestfallen Habeas, on the other hand, had not completely given up the ship, even though he felt it sinking beneath his ponderous feet. He was waging a hopeless campaign for the hand so faithfully promised by the fickle Delilah. Mr. Jackson saw, however, with eyes of anger, how the female members of darktown's social set went to the Humphreys suite in droves to acquire the wonder medicine, and he began to realize that against such pompous opposition he who made his living as a blade wielder stood little show. Having won poor Habeas' affections in competition with the other marriageable girls of the four hundred, and having triumphed in this conquest, Delilah had sought new fields to conquer, and great had been the conquering thereof.

Lizzie Smilax, official vamp of the colored set, had sought to interest Doctor Humphreys, but her offensive had been woefully weak, considering the fact that Lizzie bore the reputation of being able by one mere shrug of the eyebrows or one sensuous Baraesque twist of the shoulders to wrap any victim she cared to around her little finger.

Delilah ruled supreme in the affections of Alias and his lavishness toward her increased in the same proportion as did Habeas' passionate desire to choke him to his reward.

In the meanwhile a tidal wave of faith in Doctor Humphreys' wizardry

spread itself over the colored colony of the city, and the more famous the doctor became, the madder Habeas got. He longed to see his quondam soulmate in private, and, after many fruitless attempts, one evening he called at the servant house domicile at a time when he knew Delilah would be in, she just having finished the dishes in Mayor Scott's kitchen. Despite Delilah's remonstrance, he pushed his way into the room.

"Ah would lak to make talk with yo', Miss Gilyahd," he announced.

"Sorry, indeed, dat de feelin' ain't mutual, Mistah Jacksing." There was a touch of the Far North in the lady's tones and she sought to freeze him with her stare.

"Ah speckted yo'd feel a hes'tancy in grantin' de int'view," remarked the unwelcome visitor with a touch of pathos.

"Dat's de fus' good 'spicion yo' is had in some time, Mistah Jacksing," continued Delilah ironically.

"But, Delilah——"

"Don' Delilah me. Dat priv'lege is 'lowed to but one pusson at a time."

A picture of the rosy past flitted before the miserable Habeas.

"Ah uster call yo' dat."

"Uster ain't is."

"Ah is got somethin' which is just got to be said to yo'."

"If dat's de case, put yo' tongue in high, Mistah Jacksing, 'cause Ah is in a special hurry."

"Why come?"

"Well, if yo' insis' on meddlin' in othah fokeses' 'faihs, Ah's got a date, dat's why come."

"Got a date wid which?"

"Wid de deahes' an' wises' pusson dis side of de nawth pole. Ah an' Doctah Humphreys is gwine out to a fish fry to-night in his cah."

"Yo' has oodlins of dates recen'ly."

"Yo' spoke a mouthful, Mistah

Jacksing. Ah doesn't know of anything mo' of which Ah's got dan dates."

Habeas' jaw dropped gloomily like a fallen arch. Delilah, noting his unsuccessful attempt to conceal the look of misery, continued merclessly:

"When Alias comes to me all dolled up in dat beavah hat an' dat exquisick long-tailed coat, mah heart goes pity-pat. Ah adoahs him, Mistah Jacksing, an' now Ah realizes it was all a mistake dat Ah an' yo' evah got ouahse'ves engage."

Habeas feebly sought to save something from the wreckage of his hopes.

"But dey's one date Ah is had wid yo' fo' a long time. Yo' 'greed to let me be yo' eschot to de Cha'ity Ball. Dat contrack still hold good, do it not?"

"Not if Alias deegrees othahwise."

Resolved to handle the situation diplomatically, though boiling inwardly, Habeas argued:

"But, sho'ly yo' wouldn't go back on yo' wu'd on 'count of him?"

"Ah'd go back on anything if'n he commanded me to, Mistah Jacksing, even on a red-hot stove. Dat man got me mesmerized out'n mah senses."

"An' yo' ain't gwine to de ball wid me?"

"Not if Alias dis'proves."

"An' we ain't 'gaged no mo'?"

"Ah's afraid not."

Antagonism gleamed in Habeas' eyes and, assuming that his next query would prove a veritable thunderbolt, demanded hotly:

"Den wheah's mah ring?"

"Alias has got it." Delilah made this frank statement carelessly.

"Why come dat niggah got it?"

"Alias wanted a jool specialist to see if it was gen'wine. De deah man 'lows he don't want his dollin' wearin' pastry diamonds. He un'stood dat yo' give it to me fo' keeps, but he don't want me to weah it if it's pastry."

Habeas was gloomy, but positive.

"Well, Ah wants dat ring. No fake doctah can run roun' wid mah prop'ty!"

Delilah's answer ignored the ring.

"Yo' is speakin' of a good frien' of mine, Mistah Jacksing, in mah house, an' has called him out'n his name. Now, get off'n dese premises befo' Ah throws yo' off or has it did!"

Habeas almost scraped the floor with a bow.

"Yo' command alone is whut gets me off'n dis po'ch," he advised grandly. "As fo' havin' me throwed off, dey ain't no five niggahs in dis town whut could 'complish dat feat. If dat li'l, sawed-off doctah tried it, Ah'd knock him so fuh in de groun' dey'd have to probe fo' him six weeks wid a steam shovel. Good night, Miss Gilyahd."

Delilah did not reply, and, sad of heart, Habeas turned homeward, gloom hordes dogging his every footstep, for, when fate starts to bucking Dan Cupid's line, anything is liable to happen. Fate will get offside, will slug, will short-arm, and, in fact, do anything to gain its point and make the victim uncomfortable.

Just by way of example, fate had decreed that Doctor Alias Humphreys and Habeas Corpus Jackson live in the same apartment house. Habeas' room was the first to the right on the second floor. Darktown's hair specialist had been given a suite of rooms, opening into the hall on the left, on the second floor, and, while Doctor Humphreys didn't know the identity of his neighbor across the hall, Mr. Jackson had been more inquisitive.

Habeas went immediately from his audience with Delilah to his apartment and, as he began climbing the stairs, Doctor Humphreys began descending.

"Has yo' a match, mah good man?" inquired the doctor, stopping casually.

"Nope, mah po' fellah, Ah isn't got a match eyethath phys'cally or to light a cigarette wid," Habeas replied.



"Yo' is quite sahcastic."

"Only dem whut's phys'cally fit can be dat way."

"Niggah, does yo' know yo' is talkin' to one of de mos' inflooshul men of dis municipillity?"

"Ah do not."

"Well, yo' is."

"Fokeses' 'pinions diffuhs," smiled Mr. Jackson broadly.

"Niggah, Ah is Doctah Alias Humphreys, de man whut put antikink on de map." In one breath Doctor Humphreys stated his claim to fame and respect.

Habeas, however, was unimpressed.

"Still Ah isn't thrilled."

"Ig'nunce is bliss, boy, an' yo' sho' is got enough of it to be pres'dent of de illiterary sassiety."

"If ig'nunce is bliss"—Mr. Jackson turned the argument into a boomerang—"you's gwine laugh yo'se'f plum' to def some day."

With which parting shot Habeas climbed to his room, while Doctor Alias sought his car at the curb.

Doctor Alias Humphreys' heart was as light as a cream puff. That of Habeas Corpus Jackson was a few ounces heavier than a ton of pig iron.

Alias Humphreys and his lady companion made a merry evening of it, dwelling at length over the flowing bowl.

Not until he had reached the environs of his own apartment, however, did the conqueror of kinky locks lose control of himself. Reaching the stairway leading to his suite, Alias gave a good imitation of a man in the advanced stages of locomotor ataxia. His feet flew aimlessly hither and yon, but, after a tedious zigzag course, he finally reached the topmost step, his brain awl and his sense of direction completely gone. Instead of turning to the left, the distillery dromedary wheeled abruptly to the right, turned the knob, and hove into the sanctum of Habeas

Corpus Jackson, where he came to anchor. As he did so, Habeas Corpus sat straight up in bed, wild-eyed and stricken with sudden fear. Habeas did not realize at once just what was coming off, but a moment later he noticed that it was the doctor's wearing apparel.

Unconscious of his mistake or his company, Doctor Alias Humphreys disrobed with difficulty, leaning against the wall for support, weaving to and fro and threatening to become overbalanced at any moment and topple to the floor. Alias ripped off the prize Prince Albert and hurled it atop the water pitcher; he threw his priceless gray spats out of the window, and stuffed collar and tie into a shoe, singing the while:

"Why don' yo' be lak me? Why don' yo' be lak me?"

Ah drinks mah whisky straight an' let de cocaine be."

The terror-stricken Habeas realized by this time that there was little chance of getting rid of Doctor Alias Humphreys in his present condition, so he philosophically decided to make the best of it.

The inebriated specialist lunged for the bed and luckily hit his target, having gone fast asleep while still in motion.

Habeas stood in the middle of the room, his face dark. Finally his vision strayed to the forlorn-looking Prince Albert atop the water pitcher. And then Habeas had the germ of a great idea.

He had heard Delilah gurgle in ecstasy over his wonderful coat, and he had listened to others of the feminine gender comment on the dignity it lent to its wearer.

It seemed to Habeas to be a veritable coat of enchantment, more precious, indeed, than the ancient Tuxedo of biblical fame, worn by Joseph.

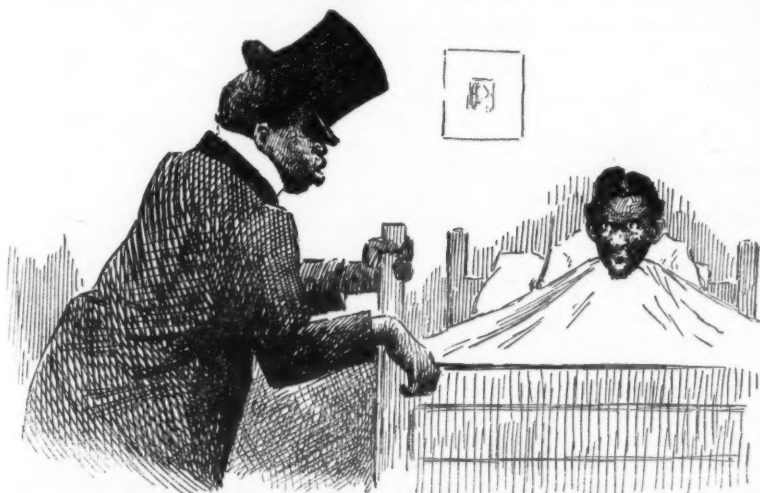
"Would such a coat give him the

bearing and grace that it contributed to Doctor Humphreys? Would he look like a celebrity in such raiment?" These thoughts coursed the mind of Habeas. Now was a good chance to give the thing a test. So Habeas made an agile spring for the pitcher and in a jiffy was trying on the miracle coat. He then surveyed himself at length in the mirror, and one could have told by the contented smile that the effect was pleasing. Habeas turned round and round, look-

ments the snoring of Doctor Alias Humphreys had been augmented by an accompaniment.

Habeas quit his room the following morning at an early hour, in order that Alias might not guess that he had had a bedfellow the night previous. Before leaving the room, however, he stood beside the bed, and, looking down at the sonorously slumbering doctor, he murmured:

"Every dawg gwine have his day, an'



Habeas Corpus sat straight up in bed, wild-eyed and stricken with sudden fear.

ing at the fit from every angle. Only his innate modesty forbade him deciding that he looked perfect.

Before Habeas' right hand knew what his left hand was doing, and while the snore of Doctor Alias Humphreys reverberated in the room, Habeas was laboring at great length over a parchment that he had dug out of an inner pocket of the coat. Despite his poor attempts at reading, he soon gathered the meaning of its contents, gave an exultant little whoop of joy, reread the paper to make sure, then removed the coat, and retired. And in a few mo-

ments though Ah doesn't believe in palmistry, Ah can fo'see trouble in oodle lots fo' dat da'h canine."

The charity ball was an annual event around which hinged Darktown's entire social existence. Any happening, be it joyous or "holocaustic" in nature, dated to so many weeks before or so many weeks after "de cha'ity ball." The charity ball was to darktown what Mardi Gras is to New Orleans, or All Saints' Day to a native Argentinian. It was always *the event* of the year, the *ne plus ultra*, the final word.

Invariably it marked at least a dozen matings by members of the younger set and equally as many dematings of those who had weighed domesticity in the balance and found it wanting. Every negro in the city who could scrape together the general admission price was there, and every dusky-hued son and daughter made it a point to accumulate a surplus as many weeks beforehand as was possible in order to be "well heeled" financially for this joyous occasion.

The affair promised to be of even more gigantic proportions than ever before, by virtue of the fact that Habeas Corpus Jackson, chairman of the entertainment committee, had announced to the world at large that the program would be more gorgeous than ever, and that a monumental surprise, which would leave the colored citizenry gasping, was to be sprung. Professor Simon Sampson, in on the know, had predicted it would be the peer of all coups d'état, and whenever this principal of the colored college swerved from his plugging, plodding course to grow enthusiastic over anything, it was a cue for the "charcoalery" to sit up and take notice.

As a consequence, Crowder's Hall was a veritable mass of black and tan on the evening of the twelfth annual charity ball. It was a misty, foggy night, but the dampness of the atmosphere failed to dampen the ardor of those present. The hall was a riot of color—silks and satins, made up of all the hues of the rainbow, but none of so modest a tint as those of the "covenant arch."

Autos chugged at the entrance and clogged the thoroughfares leading to this bedlam. The band, replete with jazz, ground off "rag" after "rag." And, despite the fact that the hall was a beehive of colored humanity, still they kept coming.

The band played innumerable dances,

and finally ceased to function from sheer lack of breath. It was then that Habeas Corpus Jackson climbed aboard a table and caught the attention of the guests. Habeas Corpus had an announcement to make and proceeded to make it.

"Grandmaw Spraggins, who is looked upon as a seventh daughter, has agreed to tell fortunes fo' dis 'casion wid de kahds, de saucer an' teacup, an' also palmistry. As de printed program states, all candidates fo' king an' queen of de ball will have dey fortunes tole in pairs an' in public. Now le's all gather roun' grandmaw's booth an' see an 'heah whut she got to say."

"Come on, Narcissis," said Caroline Portier, grabbing her friend, Miss Cloud. "Doctah Alias Humphrey an' Delilah Gilyahd is candidates fo' king an' queen. De doctah has all the Meth'-dis' votes, an' he's promised to get de chu'ch a pipe organ if dey elects him to be de king an' his gal to be de queen. Dey's gwine take de fortunes alphabetically, an' doctah's name is fus' on de lis'. Let's see if grandmaw tells dem dey is gwine get ma'ied."

Now Doctor Alias Humphreys, had he been left solely to his desires, could have passed the evening very nicely minus the fortune-telling episode. Not that he had any faith in Grandma Spraggins' ability to look into the past or to span time with her vision, for the wrinkled old woman, it appeared to the doctor, was so impaired of eyesight that she could scarcely see farther than the end of her plateaulike nose. But there were certain things in the great specialist's past that he did not care to have the prying eyes of the general public gaze upon, and while he took little stock in mind reading and still less in clairvoyancy, he could not see the wisdom of taking unnecessary chances on something that might prove embarrassing.

But the printed program of the

evening's festivities had carried an announcement to the effect that all candidates for king and queen would have their fortunes told in pairs. To refuse in the face of this regulation would also prove embarrassing, so, with a slight shrug of the shoulders, Doctor Alias Humphreys, the pulchritudinous Delilah leaning gently and proudly on his arm, strutted in grandiose fashion toward Grandma Spraggins' booth, with no less than a thousand pairs of eyes gazing in awe upon the couple as they occupied the spotlight.

Grandma Spraggins, an ominous touch in her voice and looking very much like the old witch of broomstick fame, except that her complexion was supertar-babyish, piped shrilly, a fiendish smile playing across her face the while:

"Ah tells de pas', present, an' future."

Silence reigned. It seemed that Doctor Alias Humphreys, always smooth of tongue, was nonplused for the moment.

Grandma singsonged in those mysterious tones once again:

"Ah tells de past, present, an' future."

Lizzie Smilax giggled. Parson Abdul Hammett gave his customary "Amen!" and Alias felt that it was up to him to respond in some fashion.

"Ah doesn't care ef yo' does," he said boastfully. "Ah bets yo' can't straighten haih lak whut Ah is efficient in doin'."

"Does yo'-all want de teacup fortune or de kahds or palmistry?" questioned the decrepit old woman. "Ah does all three fluently."

Delilah looked lovingly into the eyes of the doctor, signifying that his will was law, that what he should choose would also be of her choice.

"Ah is suah it makes no diff'unce, Mis' Spraggins, which of the three yo' does," replied the doctor. "But beah in min' dat Ah is a man of great research

an' learnin', dat Ah is read up on signs an' things sign-tiffick, an' dat Ah fully knows de limitashuns of mortal bein's, an' don' take no stock in Thomas fool-ery. Also beah in min' dat Ah is a busy man, seekin' always to look aftah somethin' really wu'th while fo' de up-lif' an' bettahment of de cullud race, an' dat Ah has li'l time fo' lahks such as dis. Dat bein' de case, Ah would axe yo 'to press onward, full steam behin', an' get dis li'l' joke ovah wid as soon as possible."

Grandma Spraggins' tone grew stern.

"Ef you' is a disbelievah an' seeks to sneer in de face of mah art, doctah, Ah feels it mah boundin' duty to make a convert out'n yo'. Theahfo' Ah is gwine diskahd dese kahds an' de teacup, an' yo' an' all de res' of us is gwine talk to de spirits."

"Meanin' which?" gulped the doctor.

"Meanin'," said Grandma Spraggins dramatically, "dat Ah is gwine bring de spirit of yo' daid wife heah an' let her in de spirit talk to yo' in de flesh."

Doctor Humphreys was silent. Delilah was silent. The entire hall was silent. No one spoke; no one could think of anything to say, least of all Doctor Alias Humphreys, hair specialist.

Eventually it was the voice of Delilah Gilyard that broke the stillness. In hollow tones and with lips aquiver, she said:

"Good Gawd, Alias, deah! Yo' isn't tole me dat yo' was a male widow."

Grandma Spraggins did not give the quaking doctor a chance to reply.

"Yes, Ah is gwine bring de formah Mrs. Doctah Alias Humphreys fum de grave an' let her commune wid yo', doctah," she threatened with a cackle peculiar to the witchcraft type.

"Make him lak it, granny," insisted Lizzie Smilax, who could not look for long even on spirits without allowing her mouth to fly open to voice her sen-



Equipped with this weapon of timber, Mrs. Alias sprang into action.

timents. "Trot out de ole woman, an' le's see if she will stan' a compa'son wid de gal whut's gwine supplant 'er."

"Shut yo' mouf, gal, befo' Ah bust it shut wid mah fists," snapped the doctor with less composure and more rudeness than darktown's citizenry had ever seen him exhibit before. Then he continued unsteadily, "Delilah, deah, dis ole woman is sufferin' f'um *lunacy backsilly*. She's crazy in de haid! Ah isn't nevah had no mo' wife dan John Wesley had a grog shop."

"Yo' lies!" shrieked Grandma Spraggins. "Ah can prove dat yo' lies if dis congregation deman's it."

"We deman' it," shouted Parson Abdul Hammett.

"Ah secon's de motion," proclaimed Habeas Corpus Jackson.

"Le's get out of dese ravin' lunatics' way, Delilah," tremulously advised the doctor.

But superstition had a tenacious clutch on Delilah. For once she found a voice more powerful and more commanding than that of her beloved doctor.

"No, Ah is a ruint 'oman, if dey thinks Ah is bein' fooled dis away, doctah," she replied. "It is bes' fo' us to stay an' expose de fake."

No amount of persuasion on the part of the doctor could budge her.

"Ev'ybody right quiet, now," admonished Grandma Spraggins in hollow tones and mysterious fashion. Waving her skinny arms and staring blankly into space, grandma staged a few grotesque contortions, mumbling sundry words of mysticism.

"Allah, Booda, Ad-mal! Hoke us, poke us, presto-changeo!" she slowly drawled. "Mis' Humphreys, Ah is callin' yo' f'um de grave. Ah is axin' yo' to cross de rivah Sticks, an' to ooze out'n yo' tomb an' into ouah presence. Ah heahs yo' footsteps approachin'. Step fo'th, Mis' Humphreys."

Eyes distended, tongues protruded, knees wobbled, and blood coursed icily through the veins of each individual in the assembly, as the folds in the little green curtain in the rear of Witch Spraggins' booth slowly parted. Through the aperture stepped a very

black, very large, very kinky-headed, and very angry negro woman.

"Alias, yo' ole fool, take dat gal's ahm off'n yo' shoulder, befo' Ah busts yo' in de jaw an' teahs her hail out by de roots!" rasped the alleged spirit.

Habeas Corpus Jackson's face was wrapped in a blanket of ecstasy.

Parson Abdul Hammett was the first to regain his composure. Clearing his throat and holding on to the railing of the booth for support, he summoned as much dignity and bravery as was possible, and asked in a shaky voice:

"Strange 'oman, Ah axes yo' whut is de meanin' of dis?"

"De meanin' is simply dis: Ah got a lettah f'um a gen'man frien' whut is a perfec' stranger to me, statin' dat mah husban' whut had deserted me was in dis town, maskeradin' as a single man. Thanks to Mistah Habeas Corpus Jackson, Ah takes de tip, an' heah Ah is to fin' dat he spoke de troof."

"An' yo' isn't no spirit?" doubtfully asked Narcissis Cloud, as the jowls of her fat face shivered.

"Look at dis heah ahm on me," said the gigantic woman, as she rolled up her sleeves. "Did yo' evah heah of a spirit havin' a muscle lak dis which Ah's got? An' dis muscle is backed up by mo' persuasion dan yo' evah heered of befo'. If yo' don' believe it, ax dat triflin' Alias Humphreys whut deserted me. He's came in contact wid dis fist of mine, an' he's gwine come in contact wid it again when Ah gets him home."

"Is yo' his real wife?" asked Lizzie Smilax, the vamp.

"Co'se Ah is his real wife."

"An' yo' haid is kinky?"

"Co'se mah haid is kinky! All niggahs, whut is real niggahs, is got kinky haid."

"Den Doctah Humphreys' antikink isn't no good?"

"Ah doesn't know nothin' about Doctah Humphreys, but yo' can bank on

anything dat Alias Humphreys has got not bein' no good!"

It suddenly dawned upon the females present that they had been victims of fraud. Their ire was up. And as Habeas Corpus Jackson carried the limp form of Delilah Gilyard toward the exit, all present, with blood in their eyes, made a rush for the faker.

Despite the shortcomings of her shrimp of a husband, however, Mrs. Alias Humphreys had not come to town to see him massacred. The primary object of her visit had been to carry him home with her alive. She knew he was trifling and fickle, but despite his many flaws of character, she loved him. And when she saw the mob forming she prepared to protect the spindly legged Alias, as he stood there glued to the floor, and prayed that he might be transformed into something equipped with wings; anything at all, as long as the transformation was made quickly.

With her mighty arm, Angeline tore a heavy scantling from the booth, and the entire framework came down upon the scrawny head of Grandma Spraggins, leaving the impromptu witch moaning and groaning beneath the débris. Equipped with this weapon of timber, Mrs. Alias sprang into action, and never a Big Bertha or a French seventy-five wrought more havoc than did Angeline, as she swung that scantling through the air in the flaillike fashion of a Babe Ruth or Cobb.

It took a riot call to police quarters to bring the fracas to a halt, and the police reserves were busy a greater part of the night, carting casualties to the police station. Angeline Humphreys and her husband were among the first to get a ride in the wagon, and the charity ball came to a more disastrous end than it had experienced in history, except for the fact that it was continued the following morning when police court did a land-office business.

Witnesses against Mr. and Mrs. Alias



Humphreys filled the room. Dark-looking specimens with battered and bruised features and closed eyes, mute evidence that they had been in the pathway of an improvised shillalah in the hands of the giant negro woman, whose tonnage was in close proximity to three hundred pounds, and they looked sadly at this female Tarzan as she stood before the bar of justice.

Habeas Corpus Jackson was on the witness stand.

"Did you see all this rumpus, Habeas?" asked Judge Broyles.

"Naw, suh. Ah lef' jus' as it got stahted."

"Why did you leave?"

"Cause Ah had a fainted woman in mah ahms."

"Where did you go from the ball?"

"Ah went to Mistah Porteeah's drug sto'."

"Then what happened?"

"Ah survived Delilah wid some spir-its of ammonia."

"And then?"

"Den Ah an' she went to de preacher's house an' got ma'ied."

"Why all the hurry about tying the nuptial knot?"

Habeas grinned.

"Jedge, Ah wanted to marry dat gal whilst she was too weak to deject me."

"And, as to the defendants, how did you learn that Alias had a lawful wedded wife?"

Then the conspiracy came out.

"He come in mah 'pahtment drunk one night, jedge. He was too stewed to know dat he was in de wrong room, an' he went to bed in mah bed, an' we was layin' there side by each. It was den dat Ah looked into his coat pocket, an' saw his 'surance policy, an' dat he had a awful wedded wife whut was named in de policy as de 'fisherary."

"All right, Habeas. That will do for you."

"But, jedge, Ah an' Delilah is so puffed up happy dat we isn't holdin' no

grudge against Mistah an' Missus Humphreys, an' if it's jus' de same to yo', we's willin' to let de mattah drop."

"You're out of order, Habeas."

"He sho' is badly out of order, jedge," sighed Lizzie Smilax. "Ah's got a scar on mah face dat Ah'll carry to de graveyahd wid me, an' Ah is sho' dat us whut is sufferin' f'um de ravishes of dat scantlin' ain't willin' to let de mattah drop."

"Us sho' ain't," contributed Narcissus Cloud.

Notwithstanding the fact that the judge was rapping for order, Mrs. Alias Humphreys rose to her feet and addressed her victims.

"If'n yo'-all fool wimmen will take dat antikink dis heah lyin' Alias sold yo', an' put it on dem cuts an' bruises, it'll help won'ful. Dat stuff ain't a thing but tuppumtime."

This brought a tidal wave of laughter from the court.

Habeas Corpus Jackson, having completed his testimony, sat down beside his Delilah, and his new wife cuddled closer and looked with adoring eyes upon him.

Judge Broyles gazed upon the weazly-looking Alias and his dreadnaught type of wife, and said:

"It's a pretty bad case, and I'll have to sentence you both to two years in jail."

Alias' head bent farther toward his knees. His was a perfect pose of dejection. His corpulent wife, on the other hand, was grinning broadly.

"Say dat again, jedge, please, suh."

"Why repeat?"

"Kase Ah isn't heard yo' floontly de fus' time."

"I sentence each of you to two years in jail."

"Jedge, Ah implo's yo', fo' Gawd's sake, to make it fo' yeahs instead of two, kase dat's de only way Ah's gwine be able to keep dis triflin' husban' of mine at home a-tall."



# WHAT THE STARS SAY

by Madame Renée Longuille

To the Heavens above us O look and behold  
The Planets that love us, all harnessed in gold!  
What chariots, what horses against us shall bide  
While the stars in their courses do fight on our side?

RUDYARD KIPLING.

## HOW TO READ YOUR OWN HOROSCOPE

### LESSON V.

**V**ENUS, the planet of love and beauty, is termed in astrology "the lesser benefic." She is nearer the Sun than we are and about the same size as our Earth, from which she is always visible. Flammarion once said that there was so great an attraction between Venus and the Earth that only the great power of the Sun prevented the crashing of these two heavenly bodies in the heavens. Throughout the ages Venus has been studied and watched, one reason for this being, probably, that she is always in sight. In the British Museum there is an old document, written in 675 B. C., in which Venus is mentioned. Thus the interest she has aroused has caused her to be referred to by various names such as Callistes, "the Beautiful," Vesper, the Evening Star, and Lucifer, the Morning Star. The ancient Arabs called her "the Splendor of Heaven."

It is interesting to note that this planet, which brings harmony and love to the Earth, has innocently been the object of much unpleasantness and even of fear. In Russia, it is said, this bril-

liant, beautiful star was fired upon by the natives, who thought it was an enemy dirigible from Austria. Again, in 1913, the light of this star caused many to fear and suppose it to be a hostile aeroplane from Germany.

Whenever Venus is found in a horoscope there will be marked good and benefit through both sign and house. Although her influence is always good and benefic, her power for material gain cannot be compared with that of Jupiter. When, on a chart of life, Venus appears in the ascendant, the constitution of that native will be greatly strengthened, but the love of pleasure and its pursuit may be strong enough to affect the health. It lends, however, a very refining influence to the character and a quiet, sweet disposition. If in or near midheaven, the life and reputation will feel the benefit, unless Saturn should throw its cold, cruel, restricting rays to Venus, in which case the character and actions would be narrow and mean.

Every planet near or aspecting Venus must be duly considered, because, like

Mercury, Venus partakes very much of the character of the aspecting planets. All the really lovable and refining qualities come through the influence of Venus, which draws in and assimilates Earth experiences necessary to stimulate the deep, inner consciousness. Whoever is signified by the planet Venus, whether man or woman, has a round face, full, cherry-red lips, and smooth, lovely hair. If Venus be found rising at birth on a chart of life, the native will surely have dimples in the cheeks or chin. I have often found that Venus in the sign Aries gives a decided tendency toward dimples, since Aries rules the head and face.

Characteristics attributed to Venus are love of pleasure, refinement, and capacity for happiness. Its metal is copper; its colors white and baby blue; its stones green jasper, beryl, lapis lazuli, and coral, also a little share of the sapphire, which is generally supposed to be the stone of Jupiter. The symbol ♀ resembles a hand mirror.

Mars can be plainly seen in the heavens as a brilliant star of red, fiery hue. In recent years this planet has swung comparatively near our Earth, or within about thirty-five million miles, thus giving us an exceptional opportunity to study its different phases and characteristics. It lies between the Earth and Jupiter and is very much smaller in size than either one. Astronomers find many canals marking its surface which, they claim, are artificial and built by the inhabitants of Mars to hold water with which to moisten the hot, dry atmosphere.

Astrologically, Mars is considered an evil planet, but its influence is not at all like that of the malefic Saturn. Alan Leo has said that "Mars is the ruler over the animal nature in man," but this does not mean that the animal nature is necessarily bad, but only that when man fails to control or use this influence properly, Mars becomes a malefic.

Persons with Mars in the first house or ascendant usually have a mark or scar on the face, or they may be very liable to receive cuts, hurts, or bruises on the head some time during life. These natives, with Mars thus placed, will be of a courageous, warlike nature, often rushing into danger without reason.

When Mars is used to describe a person, he or she will often be found to have a rather large face, with high color in the cheeks or an even color all over, giving a sun-burned look. The eyes of these people are usually small or piercing. The hair varies in color according to the sign in which Mars is found. There will be the usual martial mark or scar on the face. The body will be strong and sturdy. The proud, quarrelsome nature will be tempered by the sign. For instance, if Mars should be poised in the sign ruled by Mercury, the native would steal; if in the sign ruled by the Moon, he would be a drunkard; if in his own sign, he would very likely be quarrelsome. The astrological character of Mars in almost any position is considered ardent, energetic, and always seemingly ready to "start something." The color is brilliant red; the stone, hyacinth; the metal, iron. The symbol ♂ is supposed to be an arrow shooting upward, or, in occult terms, a circle and a cross.

The great, powerful, ponderous Jove, or Jupiter, is one hundred and sixteen times the size of our Earth. It shines with a pale, white light and takes almost twelve years to pass completely around the zodiac. It is called in astrology the Great Benefic, opening up the gates of good fortune behind which Saturn has imposed toil and suffering, by which experience is accumulated. When Jupiter opens the gates the lessons taught by this experience issue forth as good fortune. Jove is connected with the better, more liberal side of the character, and with gain which comes from being

jovial, sociable, and expansive. When one is under the influence of Jupiter all efforts and work seem to count and to make a decided showing. In a way, this great planet is the expression of what we have learned, worked for, and assimilated in former lives.

When Jupiter is rising at birth, or, in other words, is found in the first house, he confers on that native a good constitution and ability to overcome many of the adversities in life. Those under his influence are light-hearted, healthy, and generous, with a funny story or an encouraging word always ready for the right moment. They are the people who seem to be favored by fortune, but we may always be sure that nothing comes without being earned, and that these fortunate ones are only reaping the harvest of accumulated experience which has been sown with labor in former times. If Jupiter be found near the meridian on a chart of life, the native will some time come into wealth and distinction. This rule has been verified many times.

The chief features of a person described by Jupiter are a large face, full, clear eyes, set a good distance apart, broad, strong-looking teeth, the front two of which often have some little imperfection. The Jovian disposition will be good, the thoughts often having a religious trend. Jupiter's colors are purple, blue, and a deep sea-green. The stones are sapphire, emerald, and amethyst. The metal is tin. The symbol ♃ represents an eagle, the bird of Jove.

Although not so large as the great Jupiter, Saturn is next in size. It is a thousand times larger than our Earth. Astronomers find it very difficult to study this planet on account of the peculiar atmosphere or fog which surrounds it. This planet is called the Greater Infortune, and is probably the cause of most of the afflictions and sorrows to which man is heir. The best vibrations which Saturn can give bring

labor, thrift, economy, and the storing up of knowledge and experience. But when the influence of this cold star is perverted it will be as a "wet blanket" on all undertakings in life, rendering the disposition mean, envious, and selfish.

Saturn in the first house of a nativity causes the native to suffer much sickness of a lingering nature, and the part of the body affected by illness is readily indicated by the sign containing this afflicting star. If it is in Cancer the stomach will suffer; if in Taurus, the throat, and so on through the signs. With this position of the great malefic on his map, one should guard against blows, bruises, or falls. If Saturn be poised in the top of the chart near the meridian, perpetual trouble or a serious fall from a high position in life is quite certain to occur. It is almost as evil an augury to find it on the opposite meridian, which is the cusp of the fourth house. The influence of this planet often causes thoughts of great fear, bashfulness, or melancholia to pursue the native. But, at the same time, great patience, firmness, and even stubbornness are shown.

The personal appearance of people signified by Saturn is not always attractive. Their color is not good, being generally pale and dull; and the skin is rough and thick in appearance. Their lips are full and large. A peculiar characteristic of Saturnine people is their unsteady, wobbly gait, head down, and eyes on the ground. This may be noticed also in those who have Saturn in the first house or ascendant. Saturn, as a whole, connotes loneliness, poverty, and hard work. Its metal is lead. Black and the dull, low tones are its colors. Its stones are any dark, unpolished varieties and the lodestone. The Saturnine symbol is ♄

In the year 1781 the astronomer, Herschel, discovered a new star which he thought at first was a comet, but on closer study he found it to be the new planet, Uranus. It is many times larger

than our Earth and about nineteen times farther from the Sun than we are. Its atmosphere is supposed to be very moist and dense. Uranus cannot be seen with the naked eye at any time.

The nature of this planet is supposed to be evil, but set rules or regulations cannot be laid down concerning it. Its vibrations differ from those of any other planet. They seem to govern things of an unconventional nature. Its workings are sudden, at all events, sometimes very evil, and then again beneficial. A very high type of spiritual development is accredited to Uranus. If it is found in the first house at birth, the native will have some strange romance or unconventional happenings in his life. He will also be very likely to follow along some uncommon, extraordinary line of thought.

This planet is not so powerful as Uranus or Mars, but with certain temperaments it can work very strongly. Uranus, prominent in any nativity, gives to the person the ability to become a clever astrologer. However, it is a planet that can bear much more study, and will probably not be thoroughly understood for a long time to come.

#### Answers to Correspondents.

MASTER C. G. L., born February 6, 1905, 12 p. m., Syracuse, New York.—When you were born your parents were probably struggling against many perplexities in business, but they were very careful and were trying very hard to gain knowledge. You are persevering, active, and careful, with a leaning toward mental, rather than physical, labor. Books are somewhat of an enjoyment to you and it would be of benefit to work along literary lines. You have a natural sense of honor, but you worry too much about your future life and career.

The fine details of things interest you; therefore you could also find success as a manufacturer or mechanic, if some one else performed the labor. If you are not hindered and have the right influences around you, I am sure you will be economical and trustworthy. I find a tendency to nervous debility which may be somewhat of a handicap in life.

MISS M. C., born November 18, 1894, 7 p. m., Tulsa, Oklahoma.—You have an overabundance of material force, causing you to display many strong traits of character. Many times you will find yourself wishing to go to extremes in love or hatred. For your health and happiness you will have to subdue any emotions of suspicion or jealousy and avoid becoming overcritical. Your trouble, about which you ask me, will be much lessened during the next two years. Should you submit to an operation, be sure that the planets are well aspected and that the moon is not in Leo. Between the ages of thirty-eight and thirty-nine you will be married.

CARUTHERS, Mo., born September 4, 1880.—The planets have bestowed upon you many virtues. You are very self-reliant, though sometimes too self-centered. But, with all your independence of character, you possess real ability, and I hope you will take advantage of even the least opportunity to advance yourself in the world. Your sensitiveness requires mingling with strangers to aid you in overcoming the reserve, timidity, and shyness you possess. Surroundings of beauty, harmony, and love are absolutely indispensable to your happiness. I think that your parents were very happy and living very harmoniously when you were born. I find that a tremendous influence came into your life when you were thirty-one or thereabout, which, perhaps, was marriage or its equivalent, a harmonious love for partnership. This year, 1920, things seem to go suddenly wrong every once in a while. When you are about forty-four a most serious period occurs, in which, I warn you, you will have to guard your health and fortune to the limit. Prepare your constitution long beforehand in order to be ready to battle with the adverse influences of that year.



# The Big Thing

By Anne O'Hagan

Author of "The Wife of Asa Pincheon," "Dreamers of Dreams," etc.

ILLUSTRATED BY ROBERT A. GRAEF

The concluding installment of one of the most absorbing short serials we have ever published.

## THE STORY OF THE STORY.

Is a career the big thing in the modern woman's life, or is there, after all, a bit of truth in the platitude that "woman's place is in the home?" Anita Holt, indispensable to the cause of child labor, leaves the running of her home to other women. Her husband, Treadway Holt, returning from a Western trip, brings with him his lately bereaved maiden aunt, Miss Sally Treadway, and also Rosamund Fergus, who, on the trip East, has saved Miss Sally's life in a railroad accident.

When, as the result of complicity among her own servants, Anita's young son is kidnapped, things seem to have reached a crisis. Anita is, for the nonce, all wife and mother, but when, through Rosamund's keenness, Jamesy is restored to the distracted household, Anita promptly rushes off to her neglected committee work. More and more, Treadway Holt looks to Rosamund for comfort and cheer. She is the moving spirit of his home while his wife is away from it. Returning unexpectedly from a business trip, Anita learns that her husband has been ill. On her way to his room, she sees, through the agency of a wardrobe mirror, a touching scene between him and Rosamund—one which leaves her undeluded as to his affection for the girl.

Once more, by domestic tragedy, she is jerked back to consideration of and interest in her home. Her campaign is to charm her husband over again and to encourage subtly the admiration which John Bowman, a family friend, shows for Rosamund. But, unable to bear the situation longer, and unwilling to capitulate in behalf of a clandestine affair with Treadway, Rosamund leaves the Holts' employ. Anita plunges again into her committee work, while her husband finds less and less interest in life. One day, in the city, Holt comes upon Rosamund, weak and pale from illness. He is distraught when he hears of her hardships, and they resolve thenceforth not to stifle their love.

## CHAPTER XIV.

IN the office of the National Children's Welfare Association there was jubilation. A telegram lay upon Anita's desk. It announced the passage of a child-labor law in a Middle Western State.

"The best law we ever got through in any State where they didn't have woman suffrage!" cried one woman, flushed and disheveled, her short, gray hair standing in tufts upon her massive head, where she ran her fingers constantly through it. "The very best law! Congratulations, Anita Holt!"

"Why congratulate me?" asked Anita. Her eyes were shining, though,

and her face, of late somewhat immobile, was broken with a look of pleasure.

"Because you did more to get it through than any other one person. Oh, I'm not flattering you—it isn't my way. But you know it's true. That month you spent there organizing their State committee and showing them how to organize local committees, planning their campaign and making speeches—do you remember how discouraged you were when you came back? You said they didn't seem to have any more enthusiasm than so many oysters. And now look at them!"

"Doesn't it make you feel that the

"The Big Thing" began in the August issue.



whole thing is worth while?" Another woman, young and pretty, spoke. "Doesn't it make you feel that you ought to be ashamed of yourself for giving us the semigo-by this winter?"

The telephone rang.

"Some one for you, Mrs. Holt," said one of the secretaries. "Mr. Watts," she added.

Anita took up the receiver. Her face was lovely with its softened look.

"Hello. . . . Oh, you, Stephen? It's awfully nice of you. It's perfect nonsense, though, to say anything of the kind. It was the people out there did it. Oh, no, there's no danger of his not signing it. It was only the legislature we were afraid of. Now, if only they don't get their supreme court to declare it unconstitutional!"

Her voice grew graver as she listened to what he was saying. She shook her head and started once or twice to speak, but kept a padlock upon her lips until he was through. Then she answered decisively:

"No, Stephen, I can't think of such a thing. In the first place I'm not giving much time to public work, as you know. And in the second place I feel more and more that the wise thing, the unwasteful thing, is to get women the vote and then let them attend themselves to the legislation that affects them and their children. I am perfectly delighted about this, of course, and of course I'm going to give a good deal of my time to the committee still. But I'm going to give more time to the suffrage movement. Just see how quickly the women in suffrage States have attended to these matters!"

She listened, half smiling and half frowning, to what he answered. And when she had said good-by and had hung up the receiver, she turned to her associates.

"Dear old Stephen Watts," she said, "wanted me to say I'd run for chairman of the national committee."

"Oh, Anita! Couldn't you do it?" a pretty young woman asked wistfully.

Anita smiled affectionately at her.

"Didn't you hear me telling him how I had come to believe the suffrage movement more fundamentally important? If women don't build their reforms on the basis of political economy, they build on shifting sands.

"Mr. Watts again, Mrs. Holt," the interpreter at the telephone interrupted her.

Again Anita listened to her old friend.

"All right, half past four. But don't think that you are going to change my decision, Stephen."

They met in a little German lunch room over on the East Side, nearly deserted at the afternoon tea hour, though it did a thriving enough business at noon. Stephen's habitat was in the neighborhood, and he was a frequent customer, so that the buxom women behind the bread and cake counters in the front of the shop smiled upon him with familiar friendship. In the back room, at a little table topped with imitation marble, he and Anita sat over big, coarse cups of coffee and sugared rings of coffee cake.

"I'm not going to try to persuade you to take the national chairmanship," he told her, "though I wish to Heaven you would! Old Lovett is only a figure-head, and, besides, he isn't in real sympathy with new notions. However, I more than half believe you are right in thinking that the first thing to do is to get this infernal suffrage business off the decks. I didn't want to see you, as a matter of fact, for any very definite purpose. Just wanted to see you," he added, smiling affectionately, understandingly upon her. "Just wanted to see how you were taking the good news, if it had puffed you up a bit, or if you were bearing your laurels modestly."

"Of course, I simply love to hear you call them my laurels," Anita replied. "I

can lap up undeserved flattery with the best appetite! But, just the same, I know exactly how much—and by that I mean how little—I deserve all this praise."

"You did the initial organizing out there. That counted for a lot. Of course, it wasn't the whole thing! But it's a big part of the whole thing. It will never be so hard to do again, even after the law has been declared unconstitutional, and we have to drag the business to Washington."

He took a gulp of the hot coffee and broke a piece of the coffee ring. Then he looked again at his friend.

"I think I want to apologize to you," he said, "for some of that old-fashioned stuff I pulled on you the other day. A week or so ago—do you remember? That stuff about marriage being a job and not merely a blissful state of being. Do you remember?"

Anita laughed.

"Of course I remember. The sentiments were so foreign to your creed that I couldn't help remembering. Have you had a return of sanity?"

"If it's sane to believe that, if marriage is a job, it's not a job for *everybody*. I have," he answered with decision. "Of course, every human relation calls for compromises. Even you and I, sitting here, in this unfashionable little hole-in-a-corner, drinking this excellent coffee, out of this heavy earthenware, have had to compromise to be here."

"I don't see where you have compromised," laughed Anita.

"I've left my usual beat, to be sure, but you haven't."

"Well, maybe not," said Stephen. "Maybe what I meant was that in every man-and-woman relation, the woman has to compromise a little with her own habits and desires. I'm an old-fashioned male, myself, after all! By the way, where is your husband?"

It was out at last. Anita felt as if most of the talk that had gone before had been make-believe.

"I think quite likely he's in the city this afternoon," she replied. "He's been out in Oregon. In fact, I haven't seen him since that day we didn't go out to get Harriet's wedding present—you remember? When you read me the lec-



The little boys were hospitably delighted to see her, and urged their slightly charred viands upon her with great gusto.

ture on being a wife. Something kept me in town that night until quite late, and when I went home, I found that when he had gone out earlier, he had had a message from his father, something about that big lumbermen's strike. He started West that very evening. He's back to-day, I think. Why?"

She asked the question with her usual directness of manner and of look. Stephen did not meet her eyes. He mumbled something and swallowed more coffee. Anita stared at him. But, after all, his interest in Treadway's whereabouts could not be very genuine, and it did not particularly concern her! She returned to the subject of the child-welfare association. And Stephen buried again in his recollection, where it had been confusedly troubling him, the picture of a hansom stalled at a street corner, one afternoon ten days before, and of Rosamund Fergus' face as she looked up at Treadway.

He listened to the sound that had always delighted his ears—Anita's voice, crisp, sweet, assured, with its note of flutelike authority. To-day it seemed to him like the voice of a child playing at absolutism. The fear that had kept him company since he had seen Treadway and Rosamund together so shortly after Treadway's quarrel with Anita was lulled as he listened. Anita wasn't trifling with her happiness. Her happiness lay in doing fine, impersonal things—dear, big-souled woman! So he thought fatuously to himself.

"Oh, Stephen," she spoke with an intenser air than usual, "of course, I wouldn't admit it to any one else—but it is good; it is! Good to feel that I am helping a big thing! Don't laugh at me when I tell you something. I'd rather be the smallest cog in a great organization than the whole show in some tiny way! I'd rather be the girl who runs our mimeograph than—what did the sentimentalists use to call it?—than 'queen of the home.' Unless, of course,

I could be both. And I'm so glad and proud that you think I really did have a hand in this affair out there. Thank you, Stephen, you always believed in me, even when I was only Isabel Holt's social secretary. Do you remember?"

She stretched out her hand to him across the table and he took it and held it, awkwardly, fondly, for a second.

"No great stretch of faith to believe in you, Anita," he told her, and then he shied hastily away from the dangerous, to him uncharted, shoals of personality, and began to talk again of child welfare.

The ungrudging way in which all her associates had ascribed so great a share in the passage of the child-labor law to Anita warmed her heart as she journeyed out toward her home. It had been a particularly difficult field, that State. She recalled the discouragement she had felt when she had gone there, two or three years before, on an organizing trip. She had never hoped for any such outcome as this from that irritating, wearying, seemingly futile campaign. How nice dear old Stephen Watts had been about it all! Of course, it was Stephen, himself, more than any other one person, who had set the ball first rolling across the United States. A wonderful, eccentric, impractically practical person, Stephen! What a lot he had meant in her life! Even more after the time he had made his one strange, unaccountable essay into love-making. That had been a pure vagary of unreason; she was certain of that. Treadway had affected a humorous jealousy of Stephen that winter. Ah, that winter!

She put it resolutely out of her mind, that winter when Washington had been new to her, when the glitter of its newness was all pure gold, and when even that brilliancy had taken on new luster from Treadway Holt's presence in his father's house. Wonderful, wonderful winter! She wasn't going to be senti-

mental and to say that it had been the happiest time of her life. She was not, thank Heaven, one of those unfortunate women doomed to live forever, taking joy only in some glamorous past. The present held glamour enough for her; more than glamour—glory! But that past had been beautiful, too. It had had the palpitant, iridescent beauty of breaking day.

And to think that Treadway had repudiated the meaning of that fair dawn! To think that he denied the authenticity of the young love that had caught them up together there!

She tried to bring her mind back from this line of reverie. She was not going to be sentimental, self-pitying. She was going to be intelligent. She had promised herself that. She was going to take the materials of her life as she found them, and she was not going to let tears blind her to their possibilities. She was going to make a success, even yet, of her life!

She asked Delia, when she entered the house, if there had been any message from Mr. Holt. The girl replied that there had been. He had arrived in the city, but would not be able to get out to dinner. He would come out on a later train.

"He wanted to know if you were sure to be home to-night, Mrs. Holt," said Delia. "He seemed very anxious about that, and very glad when I told him that I was sure you would be."

"Where is Jamesy?" asked Anita.

"Him and the Sanderson boy are down in the Robbers' Cave. Miss Winthrop—that is Mrs. Kelley, said Jamesy could have his supper out there, and Mrs. Sanderson, she said that Hughie could. So cook gave them some chops and potatoes and they're down there now."

"I think I'll go down and see them before dinner," said Anita. She walked out of the house and down through the garden terraces to the little path through

the woods. She felt a need of Jamesy not altogether usual to her. It was an unanalyzable need. She did not know whether it was due to some large wave of tenderness that had its birth in the thought of all the children whom that new-made law had released to some possibility of such joys as her fortunate little son knew, or whether it was born of the pain that had made itself felt in her heart ever since her thoughts had flown back to her girlhood and to the winter when she and Treadway had met and loved.

The little boys were hospitably delighted to see her, and urged their slightly charred viands upon her with great gusto. She removed the ashes from a little, underdone potato, and ate it with some pretense of appetite. She listened to their voluble tales of their day's doings with quiet, deep satisfaction. Here was one thing of which no new knowledge of Treadway could rob her—this complete happiness in her little son!

She stayed with the boys until they had finished their meal, and then, one hanging to each hand, she climbed the hill again. At its crest Hughie Sanderson ran off toward his house, and Anita and Jamesy came into their garden again. Why was not Treadway there with them; there in spirit, in unity of family feeling, even if he were not in the body? Why had he been so dull, so immature, so belatedly adolescent as to spoil the perfect thing that might have been; that Anita had been almost willing to declare had been for so many years?

Nevertheless, in spite of criticism, in spite of pain, her heart was warmer and kinder that evening when Treadway came home than it had been for many months. It almost seemed to her, in her instinctive desire to be happy, that they had both greatly overestimated the importance of their own private emotions during this last winter. She had

probably been to blame, she told herself in magnanimous mood, in taking so tragic and unrelenting a view of what probably should have been treated as a negligible bit of flirtation—his little molehill of attraction toward Rosamund. They had both overdone the thing. It was well that he had been called away, and that they had not been living under daily stress together. It was well for emotion to take an occasional holiday.

She wondered if he would have seen in the papers the news of the passage of that child-labor law, and if, seeing it, he would remember her trip away from home two or three years ago in its behalf. He would be proud of her! Treadway, despite his conventional masculine grouching, was always proud of her successes! She hoped that he had seen the news and that he would speak of it at once. She would feel rather foolish to have to haul it into the conversation herself.

She sat reading in the library, waiting for him, after her dinner. The room was already in its summer chintzes, and the bright-flowered davenport against which she sat, backed against a long table, brought out the clear-cut distinction of her figure, robed in filmy black, and the dark, statuesque beauty of her head. There were branches of cherry-bloom in tall vases in the room, and the air was soft and sweet. Anita looked around her with satisfaction. No man could help being glad to come home to such a room as this, she thought, and, surely not to such a woman as she meant to be, so wise, so understanding, so tolerant.

It was so late, however, when Treadway arrived, that she had almost given up waiting for him. It was nearly midnight. The warm, kindly mood of the early evening had worn a little thin at the edges. Certainly, if he was as anxious to see her as Delia had intimated, he might have managed an earlier arrival!

"Oh, so you waited up? Sorry to be so late, Anita. Everything all right? How's the boy?" The words came with rather a rush. Anita looked up in surprise and a little displeasure. Treadway, very white, his face played upon, as it were, by inner excitements, had not met her eyes.

"Yes, I waited up. Delia intimated that you wanted to see me—were quite anxious about it, in fact. Everything is all right, and Jamesy is very well. What kind of a trip did you have? How was the settlement of the strike?"

He searched among the things on the table for matches. His fingers shook as he pushed back inkstands and pen trays.

"If you're looking for matches," said Anita icily, "you have twice pushed them over there behind that vase."

"What? Oh, yes! I see. Thank you." He struck a match and lit a cigarette. "Will you have one?" he asked her, holding out a cigarette box. Anita shook her head.

"Is anything the matter?" she asked sharply. "Wasn't your trip successful? Father Holt and I both thought from your telegrams that everything was coming out all right."

"Oh, the strike?" Treadway spoke vaguely as if of something so long past that he had difficulty in remembering it. "Yes, that was all right."

"Then what is the matter?" Anita, tense with waiting, passionately direct, flung the question at him. He had seated himself at the other end of the davenport, half lounging against its big, cushioned arm. But he was not looking at her. He took one or two long whiffs at a cigarette, then carefully extinguishing it in a little bowl upon the table behind him, he brought his eyes around to her face and, clasping his hands about his crossed, hunched-up knees, he said:

"I have been seeing Rosamund, Anita. That is what's the matter with me. I



have just come from her. I am living only to get back to her. I've got to be with her all the time. I'm telling it like this, brutally, because I want you to see how it is with me. I want you to understand."

"Did you have her out there with you?" The words came involuntarily, and Anita was as much surprised at the sound of them as Treadway. He flushed darkly.

"Have you gone mad? Of course she was not! What do you think she is? What do you think I am? I love her, I tell you!"

"If she hasn't been with you, and if you have been out there, I don't think I quite see——" Anita broke off. Then she began again. "You had been seeing her before you went away? That was contrary to our agreement. That was breaking your promise."

"Our agreement! My promise!" With impatient hands he seemed to fling away from him such trivialities. "I was a silly fool to enter into such an agreement. I thought I could live up to it. I didn't know how much—how much——" He caught Anita's eyes, full of pain, full of scorn, fixed darkly upon him. "Oh, I suppose you think I am talking like a silly ass."

"I think you are talking like some one in a cheap play," she answered, incisive, contemptuous. "But let us not keep babbling about feelings. Talk fact. Tell me what you've been doing; tell me what you mean to do."

"I met her one day by chance. On my word, Anita, it was by chance. I had kept my promise; she had kept her promise. It was that day—you remember?—when you were too busy to come out and buy Harriet's wedding present. I went out into the street. I wasn't thinking about her any more than usual. I went to Tiffany's to order some spoons, or something, for Harriet."

"You didn't order them, though," Anita struck in, her mind absurdly the

sport of chance words, meticulously exact about the unimportant. "For I sent a present the next day."

It did not seem to him strange to be deflected in the current of his narrative by this triviality.

"No, when I got into the store I didn't order them, after all," he said seriously. "I got to thinking about her—Rosamund, I mean. So I went out and along the street. And by and by—it was fate, Anita, it was fate!—I met her."

"Fate! Did you know where to look for her?" A personality whose existence she herself had not known all these years, spoke in Anita's sharp, scornful tones, spoke in the petty suspicions she voiced.

"I did not." He was angry. He rejoiced in the opportunity to be righteously angry. She was making it almost easy for him, with the vulgarity of her ungrounded suspicions! He had been feeling like a scoundrel all the way out from the city, and here she was restoring to him his self-respect! "I did not. You will have to believe me, Anita. You will have to understand that I am speaking the exact truth when I tell you that we had had no communication with each other whatever since she left here, and that our meeting that day was accidental. Accidental or providential, I don't know which. Chance or fate, I don't know which, is directing our affairs. I did not think when I saw her—she had been ill, dreadfully ill, Anita! I did not think—I knew that I could never let her out of my life again. I must take care of her. I—I—— It's too strong for me."

In the charming room with its blossoms and its vases and its softly shaded lamps, they faced each other. By and by, in the silence, the whole of space was for him narrowed to the rays flashing from two dark, blazing, bitter eyes. They held his own; he could not escape their compulsion. It seemed to him that



his soul writhed beneath that look, as some little insect would writhe and shrivel in the heat of a great fire. He felt that it was unjust that he should be made to see himself thus. But he endured his second, his æon, of seeing himself as Anita, in that moment, saw him. After a while he was able to jerk his gaze away from hers, and with the change something of his normal self reasserted itself. He took up another cigarette, lighted it, and asked:

"Aren't you going to say anything at all?"

"What do you expect me to say? Am I to thank you for your confidence? Am I to pronounce a blessing on your new—love?"

"Oh, come now, Anita! Do you have to flay me alive more than once?"

"I really don't know what you expect me to say, Treadway," Anita spoke more naturally now. "Of course, you might have gone on with your little affair without telling me of it. You have been too honest for that. Well, I suppose that some day I shall respect your honesty, even if I don't respect your faithfulness. But you haven't left anything for me to say. The whole thing is settled. You and she intend to see each other, intend to have your—romance, I suppose you call it. What is there for me to do about it?"

"You misunderstand me. You misunderstand her." Again Treadway flung away his cigarette and looked angrily at his wife. "I am not telling you that we intend to have our love affair! Good heavens! Can't you understand, this isn't an 'affair'? This is the real thing. I am a man of thirty-six. If I were a boy it would be different."

"If you were a boy," Anita interrupted, "the language and emotion of adolescence might be explainable, excusable. In a man of the world it's—it's nauseous."

"If I were a boy I might expect to get over it!"

"You may expect to get over it, anyway, Treadway," said Anita. "You will become expert in getting over things of this kind."

"Oh, if you're determined, in your anger and jealousy, to make sport of this, why go ahead and do it!" Treadway was indignant. "I had hoped you would be the sort of person the world thinks you—large-minded, noble, kind. I had hoped that your own decent, womanly feeling would make the proposition come from you, but since it hasn't, why, it's got to come from me. I want you to give me a divorce, Anita."

In spite of all that had gone before she was stunned by what he said. She had been his wife for so many years, their lives were so entwined that love itself was but one of the threads holding them together, and not the most important one. In spite of all that he had told her, in spite of the gibes that she had thrown at him about the adolescent quality of his new love, she was amazed, startled into a momentary breathlessness, by this suggestion. Something of the utter astonishment she felt he read upon her face. He hurried to speak to that, as it were.

"Of course, I should make every provision, every provision, for you, Anita." A little gesture of her hand stayed him.

"Have you discussed this with any one?" she asked, out of her bewilderment. "Any man? Any lawyer? Your father? Any one?"

"With no one in the world," he assured her earnestly.

"I believe you easily," she said. "I think that any sensible adviser, any sensible man of your acquaintance would have pointed out to you how utterly unreasonable such a proposition is."

"You mean you refuse to divorce me?"

"Does that astonish you? Does it surprise you if I refuse to make utter havoc of my life because you have gone temporarily mad? There isn't a single



"I have been seeing Rosamund, Anita. That is what's the matter with me. I am living only to get back to her."

wifely duty that I have not been always ready to fulfill, not one." She flushed as she spoke with vehemence. "And when you get over this—this attack of youthful imbecility, and I can forget about it and believe in your reason and your—your decency—again, I shall be ready again to do my full share."

"You haven't loved me for years! I've been second—third—forty-fifth—in the list of your interests!"

"You mean that I haven't stayed at home stagnating, disintegrating, while you have been occupied in a hundred ways? Treadway, whatever you do,

don't try to shelter yourself behind that miserable little barricade, a barricade of falsehood. If you have grown away from me——"

"It was you," he struck in, "who grew away from me!"

"If we have grown away from each other, then," she conceded impatiently, "don't put the blame upon the things with which I have filled my life. Women must fill their lives with something. Perhaps the poorest are the happiest because the things which fill their days are close and unremitting service to their own. Perhaps there is more happiness, more selfish happiness, anyway, in that

than in giving one's time and energy outside the circle of one's family loves. But, however you put it, women have got to fill their lives with something. And when men cease to love them, as you have ceased to love me, it is always easy to put the blame upon the women's interests. 'She hasn't had a thought for me since the baby came'—that's the way I've heard it put in some households! 'Always stewing over the blamed stove; never ready to go to a show the way she was when she was a girl!'—that's another form I have heard it put in. 'Always took up with her own people; always running home to see her old man and woman.' Or, in another circle, 'she doesn't care for anything but society and dress,' or 'she was always taking a music lesson—we might have been happy if she hadn't had a voice.' Oh, I could quote you a million excuses. Poor, poor Eve! The burden is all the same. Women's lives, outside the harem—maybe in it, too—have to have some other interest than passion, and men will always name that interest, that occupation, as the cause of their own unfaithfulness in love. At least be a little original, Treadway."

He did not remember that he had ever heard her say so much, or speak with such bitter eloquence upon a subject that he knew lay close to her heart. Even half distraught as he was, he thought he heard some note of reason in what she said. But he was impatient to get back to their own situation.

"There you go," he said, twisting his lips into a wry sort of smile, "true to form, even now when our life is hanging in the balance. You deliver me a little sociological discourse when I am asking you for happiness, for life itself."

"There is no such thing as happiness in your sense," retorted Anita wearily. "There are only bubbles that melt as soon as they strike the cold air of reality."

"Well, whatever there is or is not"

—his manner became dogged, ugly—"are you going to give me my freedom or are you not? Oh, Anita, how you are making me talk, how you are making me sound, even to myself! But, if you had seen her! She has been ill. She is so frail. She is so unhappy. She is made for warmth and tenderness, for nothing but love. She has no interests. Without love, she will die; all her sweet youth will perish. She is not like you. She has no thousand resources, such as you have. I want the right to take care of her. You"—his voice broke and his eyes filled with tears—"you have given me so much. Give me this, too."

She wavered; she almost consented. Did she, Anita Holt, desire an unwilling husband? But there was more than her pride, more than his desire, to consider. She could not be an impulsive girl.

"We're too tired to think clearly," she told him, her lips trembling in spite of her efforts to hold them firm. "Too tired and too excited. But—it is hard for me to refuse you anything you really imagine you want, Tread. Only you've got to let me think. You've got to let me think. I won't settle this on impulse. I won't. I won't."

## CHAPTER XV.

In the office there was excitement. Anita reached it late. She had not fallen asleep until nearly daybreak and then had overslept, not waking until after Treadway, who had an important conference with his father and the other members of the firm in regard to the Northwestern lumber situation, had already left the house. Her reason had told her that she had better follow her usual routine despite the turmoil of her mind, the dull ache of her heart. Reason, that reason which she invoked as her final guide, was always to be found among familiar things.

"We have called you up twice," cried her associate, Mrs. Benson, as she came

in. "The first time they said you were asleep, and the second time that you had already left the house. Have you seen this thing?" She held a small magazine toward Anita. Anita took it, looking in wonder from one face to another.

"*The Rib*," she repeated mechanically, as she glanced at the title of the little publication. She half laughed. A conventionalized lily adorned each corner of the cover, and the center space was occupied by one of those wonderful cottage dwellings once customary on "God-bless-our-home" mottoes. At the bottom of the cover page were a collocation of words stating that *The Rib* was the official publication of the Society for the Maintenance of the American Home.

"Is it more than usually funny?" inquired Anita, as she looked up from it again.

"Funny!" cried Mrs. Benson, and "Funny!" echoed half a dozen voices. "Just look at the leading article."

Anita turned the pages until she found the leading article. "The American Home—Must It Go?" was the title that confronted her. Beneath there was an explanatory subhead. "The Menace of the Feminist Agitation Fully Revealed. The Divorce Laws in Suffrage States. The Divorce Records of Feminist Leaders. The Free Love and Easy Divorce Beliefs of the Most Eloquent Champions of 'The Cause' Set Forth in Their Own Words."

"Is it libelous?" demanded Anita, practical at once.

"Probably not," answered gray-haired Margaret Harrington, shortly. "They never published a thing like that without letting their lawyers pass on it. It's very largely a matter of innuendo. But what's the good of talking about it? Sit down and read it."

Anita obeyed. Her face grew troubled as she read. The article was ingenuously compounded. Certain records were quoted. Damning parallel

columns from newspapers were printed. On such an such a day, such and such a woman had marched in the suffrage parade, and on such and such a subsequent date she had been reported in the papers as "acquiring residence in South Dakota for the usual purpose." Or, there was reprinted a quarter of a column of testimony in some suit for the alienation of affection, in which had been mentioned a woman more or less in the public eyes as a worker for more liberal laws for her sex. Marion van Alstyne's suit against her husband figured prominently, but not so prominently as the details of his countersuit against her.

The editorial comment upon the array of alleged facts ran thus:

These self-styled leaders of women are prepared to lead American womanhood out of the shelter of the home. Into what do they intend to lead her?

"Of course, nobody but themselves reads the silly rag," said Maud Benson, seeking comfort.

"Yes, other people do read it," Anita contradicted her. "Not deliberately, of course. But you have no idea the amount of this stuff that is reprinted in leaflet form, and of the immense circularization of the provincial districts that is done with it. We can't overlook the fact that these women are well organized. We have plenty of testimony showing that every clergyman in the country is on their mailing list, every lawyer, every man who may be regarded as a representative of the conservative classes, of the established order. They've got lots more money to spend than we have, and they spend it largely in the perversion of the rural intelligence, through the minds that sometimes lead the rural intelligence. They have their editors, too, who know what publications in every city and county are favorable to them. A magazine like this, which would never itself fall into the hands of the ordinary public, is

largely quoted on the editorial pages of small, reactionary papers, even of big, reactionary papers, and that's the way it influences the public. Oh, the silly rag does its work and does it mighty efficiently! We'd better call up Judge Graham's office, and find out when he can go over this, looking for libel."

"Suppose it is libelous? It's out!" said Margaret Harrington gloomily.

"Yes, but if we could announce a suit for libel about to be instituted immediately, you can bet that there wouldn't be many quotations from this thing! The troglodyte opinion that would be charmed to quote them wouldn't want to be codefendants with them!"

"Do you know," one of the women began with an excited air, "I heard that they, the enemy, had actually got a spy into Janet Witherspoon's house, hoping to discover something wrong in her domestic or conjugal relations. What do you think of that?"

"I don't believe it," said Anita shortly. "Not because they're too high-minded, but because, after all, they're too sensible. They couldn't publish anything their spy found out for them. Of course, this stuff they've printed here is a terrible hash, a perfect rigamarole. True and false so twisted that it would take a genius to unravel it! That's what they're counting on. They make one fact carry twenty falsehoods." She frowned and looked off into the distance. "If only there wasn't a single fact! If not one of us had ever got mixed up in any sort of scandal——"

"Why, Anita Holt! Our workers aren't a bit more mixed up in scandals like this than the antifeminist workers." This, hotly, from one of the younger listeners. Anita laughed impatiently.

"Of course our workers aren't," she said. "But that doesn't destroy the force of their statement. In the first place—and they count on this—we couldn't descend to stuff like this. We couldn't enumerate their prominent di-

vorcees, or list the ladies who are with them heart and soul, and who have figured prominently as correspondents. We simply can't fling mud. And even if we could, it wouldn't do us much good. The convincing answer to any charge is not: 'You're another,' but: 'This is a lie, and I will prove it a lie.' Unfortunately, we cannot prove all of this"—she hit the magazine lying open on her desk with her clenched hand—"false. Three quarters of it is false, but that is all carried by the one quarter of truth in it."

She sighed and looked away. Then she laughed a little.

"Stephen Watts once said," she resumed, "that all social workers, including suffrage workers, ought to be celibates. I agree with him."

"It's a bright idea," scoffed Margaret Harrington, "to get people of abnormal tastes and experiences to making the laws for all the people living normal lives! Have all the child-welfare work done by spinsters, and all the divorce laws revised by congenial bachelors! No, bad as things may be this way, they aren't as bad as they would be that way!"

"Well," declared Anita vigorously, "there's no use in our keeping on with this talk. Let us get hold of Judge Graham and find out what we can do."

But all the rest of the busy day she was aware of the decision she had reached. She could not let her husband leave her; she could not divorce him, however much impatient pride and wounded affection bade her do it. One thing in her life, she told herself bitterly, was greater than pride, was greater than tenderness or passion. That was her efficiency as a worker. She had, it seemed, failed as a woman. She had failed in the field where she had ignorantly taken it for granted that her success was already established, was impregnable. She, the beautiful, the brilliant, the woman who had married for



love, was as great a failure as any poor, plain, little creature who had the fight to win that golden gift of youth, a man's desire. She was as great a failure as any poor, tactless, ignorant fool of a woman who had ever driven love from her husband's heart by sheer boredom. But there was one place in which she was not a failure. It was, after all, a more important place than the other. She would not dull the edge of the shining weapons she carried in the fight for all the women and all the children of the world, by the tarnishing that must cling to them and to her if she dragged her old love and her present life into the divorce court. They would have to do without their "happiness" those two!

And again there swept over her a dizzying wave of incredulity. It had happened to *her*, to Anita Holt—this unbelievable ignominy, this impossible failure.

#### CHAPTER XVI.

"She won't do it, Rosamund," said Treadway.

Rosamund looked at him incredulously.

"She won't? How can she want to keep you when you no longer love her? Oh, Treadway! If the time should ever come when you no longer love me——"

"It never will. That time will never come," declared Treadway, with passionate conviction.

"But if it does, just tell me so. Just let me know"—Rosamund was tragically insistent—"and I will fade out of your life. Oh, my dear, never pretend to love me out of pity or out of habit. The truth, the truth is all I want from you!"

He promised her that she would never have from him anything except the truth. But that the truth would ever be anything hard for her to bear, he denied. He would love her forever. She was his true mate. Everything that had gone before—— Then he

stopped in his asseverations. Not even in this delirium of new love, obliterating memories, falsifying the past, could he quite bring himself to say that what he had felt for Anita had been all an illusion, a delusion, of boyhood.

Rosamund watched him with miserable, jealous eyes. She divined what was passing in his heart.

"Of course you loved *her*." Her voice rang despairing. "You loved her, and you may love her again. Why not? She is a thousand times more beautiful than I!"

He kissed her.

"I shall stop every little lie you try to tell in just that way," he threatened her.

Rosamund clung to him, the storm of jealousy and unhappiness breaking in the sheer delight of his presence, in the joy of his praise.

"Do you think," she asked, "that that will be the way to stop me from telling lies?"

He kissed her again, charmed with her little jest, charmed with the April-changing in her moods. But when the joyous interlude of love-making was over, the same, stark fact faced them. Anita refused to divorce him.

"But why? But why?" cried Rosamund, desperate again. "I don't understand. She is proud, tremendously proud. How can a proud woman want to keep a man tied to her, when he no longer loves her? Oh, she thinks that she will win you away from me. She thinks she can get you back."

"I don't believe," said Treadway honestly, "that she would turn her little finger over to win me back."

"Of course she would! Any woman would. And she thinks that if she keeps you with her she will have the chance. And she will, she will. You will see her all the time, so beautiful, so clever, so able. You will be proud of her; you always *have* been proud of her." Miserably she accused him. "You



will be proud because she is your wife, and can do such wonderful things—make speeches, plan campaigns, browbeat senators. Oh, you will be proud of her!"

Treadway took her two nervous hands, whose fingers she was interlacing in a sort of agony, and held them in a steady grasp.

"You must not be so tempestuous," he chided her. "You must not torment yourself so. I have been proud of her, yes. And if she would be fair to us now, if she would be the woman I always believed her, I could keep on being proud of her and of her successes. But now they are all part of that spirit that is standing between you and me, is standing between us and our happiness. I can't admire it any longer." His voice achieved the effect of noble, detached criticism.

"But what does she say?" Rosamund cried impatiently. "What reason does she give? She can't be so—so—so perfectly arbitrary as just to sit up and say that she won't divorce you because she doesn't want to! There must be some other reason. I mean, she must say that there is some other reason."

"That is about all she says. She has implied"—he reddened darkly—"that she regards this as—as a temporary affair. She has intimated that she is prepared to wait until I return to my right mind. Don't pull your hands away, Rosamund. It was she who said that, not I. I know that I have never been in such a right mind before. I know that with you all the currents of my nature run smooth and sane."

They were seated in the grim drawing-room of Rosamund's eminently respectable lodging house. The lodger who had occupied its shabbily magnificent reaches had departed two days previously under the cloud that accompanies the nonpayment of lodging-house bills. In another day or two it would again close its heavy doors upon the en-

trance hall and become again the home of some wanderer of large tastes, of dreadfully expensive habits. But in the meantime, Rosamund had been able to secure its use for an hour or two by due representations to her landlady of the importance of the "business interview" which she had to have that day. Looking about her, she felt a wave of bitterness engulf her at the contrast between the stage that was set for her love-making and the one that Anita could command.

How she had loved all the luxury, all the charm of that house! How her being had seemed to expand in it! What an unfair thing life was, giving her this dinginess, this furtive, musty atmosphere for her romance, while Anita had had all the blue and gold radiance of an open day.

After his last speech, they sat upon the dim, worn upholstery of the stiff sofa and looked sadly at each other.

"Well, then," sighed Rosamund, "I suppose we must not see each other any more. I suppose—I am quite well now, well enough to try to get a job. Yes, that is what we must do. We must part again, and this time really forever, and I must get some work."

"You are talking nonsense. You must know it. Have we not proved that we cannot live apart? You may call it what you please—pleurisy, typhoid, one name is as good as another—but I know you were sick because your whole being was ill for want of me. You are so finely put together, Rosamund. Your body is so truly only the shell for your dear soul. When your heart is sick with longing and your whole nature starved from repressions, then that delicate, beautiful body of yours responds and is sick, too. I am not so fine an instrument, but even I have felt it. My old energy, my old zest in life, that was gone while I was separated from you. We must see each other. I don't despair of Anita's chang-

ing her mind. After all, she is a reasonable woman in the main. She is kind. I confess that she surprised me by her stand. I had thought, like you, that she was too proud, too cold, to want to keep the husk of marriage when the soul was gone. Let us give her time to get used to the idea."

"But suppose she doesn't get used to it?" Rosamund spoke in a low, troubled voice. She looked questioningly at him. Her face was faintly colored by emotion, her lustrous gray eyes were both daring and shy.

"We mustn't allow ourselves to think of any such possibility," declared Treadway firmly. "We must believe—we must *know* that this utterly false situation will end, that it will become as unbearable to her as it already is to us."

"But if it doesn't?" Rosamund persisted.

"It will."

She looked away from him. There was a steel engraving of the Huguenot lovers on the opposite wall. She looked at it intently for a while, revolving many things. Finally she turned back to him.

"Treadway, if she persisted in her refusal what would you do? Would you, could you ever think of—of yourself being the one to—to—" Her voice broke. She could not finish her sentence. Treadway half recoiled.

"Are you asking me if I could ever start proceedings against her? But on what grounds? She has been absolutely blameless as far as the law recognizes blame. She may have ceased to love me long ago. I think myself, that she did, but—"

"She did!" Rosamund uttered the exclamation with conviction. "Truly I believe that, Treadway, or else I should feel more guilty than I do in loving you myself and in letting you love me. She had ceased to love you. She had ceased to value your love. That was what

made it right, or nearly right, for us to love each other."

"Well, but the law does not take account of intangibilities like that. She has been a perfectly good wife in every way that the law does count. If the world were a little more enlightened about the relations of men and women, if it didn't permit marriage to be a strange hold, it would be different. But the world is as it is, and particularly this State of our blessed Union. Any man who wants to escape from marriage here has either to provide himself with a wife who is willing or with one who is base. Anita"—he choked a little over her name—"is neither."

"Treadway, if she persists, would you ever feel that you could go to another State, where they have a little more leniency toward poor, human hearts? Could you ever bring yourself to go and live somewhere else? It isn't because I want you to do it," she went on earnestly. "It isn't because I am trying to suggest to you another way out of our difficulty. It is only that I want to know—I want to know—what you would really do for the sake of our love for each other."

He looked at her blankly for a second. His lips parted to give utterance to an instinctive reply, and then they closed again for a second. Her face was lovely in its appeal. Those eyes, so tenderly gray; that mouth, so softly, tremulously modeled—these could not be answered with harsh brevity.

"But, my darling little girl," he said, taking her hands, "my business is here. I am not a mere spender, a mere waster. Men of that class may be able to flit about, acquiring residences for all sorts of purposes. But I am a business man."

"Do you love your business more than—more than—more than you love me?" Her voice was sweet and luring.

"I love nothing on earth so much as I love you," he told her passionately, earnestly. "But business—business—



Treadway brought her out one mellow, dreamy September afternoon to look at it.

Anita's way is better than mine. Don't you see? She has something else. I—I have only my love for you to live on. And—and you and she, between you, are going to deny me that."

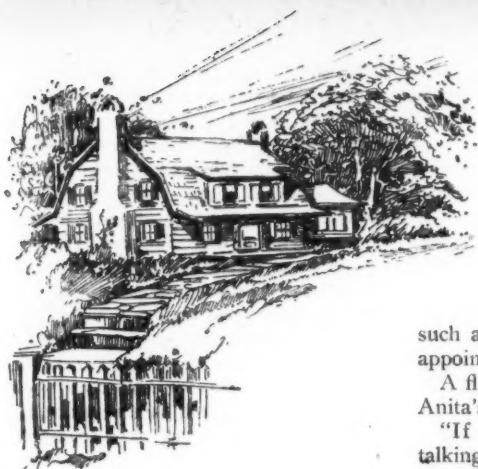
He silenced her with tender reproaches and protestations. If worst came to worst, he lied; if Anita remained obdurate, why, business might go hang; all the structure of the life that he had reared might be demolished. He would go away. He would forget his interests, his activities and, and somewhere else would begin a new and radiant existence with her.

She cried a little and clung to him. He kissed her face and tasted the salt of tears. - Passionately he desired her. Anita must yield, must be made to yield!

why, it is the necessity that underlies all my life, even my love for you."

Rosamund looked at him with tender eyes swimming in tears.

"I knew you would say that!" she said through quivering lips. "Oh, I knew you would say that! And I know that it is true and right and reasonable. Only—only—don't be angry with me, Treadway!—it makes me wish, for a minute, that there was something else in my life as important as my love for you, or more important. After all,



## CHAPTER XVII.

"There is nothing personal about it, Treadway," said Anita firmly. "I am quite sincere in saying that. If I ever felt jealous, I think I have got over it. If I felt—as, of course, I *did*—our old love for each other made contemptible, I have got over the pain of that, too. If it were just a question of you and me and her, I'd pack my trunks for Reno to-morrow, or I'd even facilitate things more. I'd be guilty of any kind of collusion you wanted, here in this State, that makes everything so base. But I tell you I am not considering myself at all. I am not even considering Jamesy."

Treadway winced at mention of his little boy's name. But he avoided talking of him.

"You may dress it up with fine names if you want to," he said. "But I think any impartial judge would agree with me that you are showing a miserable 'dog-in-the-manger' spirit. You don't want me yourself. That's no new thing. You haven't really wanted me for years. But now, admittedly, you don't want me. You boast that you're not even jealous

of me, and jealousy, I suppose, is the very least residuum of love. And yet you won't let the woman who does love me"—he flushed a little, but kept his eyes steady before her cold, half-contemptuous regard—"you won't let her have me. You won't let her make me happy. You won't let me make her poor, bruised, young life happy. I never expected

such an attitude from you. I am disappointed in you."

A flicker of amusement passed across Anita's face.

"If you could only hear another man talking like that, Treadway!" she said. "How you would be amused! But never mind. I have told you that I don't intend, if I can avoid it, to have my standing in the world lessened by any scandal such as you obligingly offer me. I have told you that it isn't on my own account, but on account of my work."

"Your work!" he interrupted her with an impatient sneer.

She colored a little.

"Yes, my work. It happens to be as important to me as your work is to you. I think more important. It is all that you have left me to regard as important in my life. I've told you that before. I have no fresh love affairs to fill the days you leave empty! I don't mean to institute any proceedings against you. And the reason why is as I have said." She looked at him with sudden-dawning interest in her dark eyes. "I wonder how much you really *do* love each other, you two," she speculated. "Is it as serious as you both claim? Can it be that, unknowingly, I have lived all these years with a man capable of being one of the great lovers of the world? You know that is a career in itself—a great lover! But, somehow, I don't believe it of you, Treadway."

"I don't claim to be one of your

Lancelots or Leanders," he answered irritably. "I love like an ordinary man, but I believe that the ordinary man loves far more deeply and persistently than you are willing to admit."

"I!"

Anita's amazement interrupted him. But Treadway, on the full current of his thought, regardless of the fine irony of his words and his behavior, went on: "As for Rosamund, I think she is one of the women to whom love is a career. It is women like that, my dear Anita, who love enough of a career for a man also." He thought he had said something rather clever and looked at her half expectantly.

Anita had generally accorded his cleverness, his humor, the tribute of ungrudging appreciation. But no look of appreciation softened the stern beauty of her face now. She shrugged her shoulders slightly as if dismissing the speculation. She spoke to his real theme, not to the mere topic he had thrown down as for debate.

"I've finished," she said. "I am not going from New York and acquire a residence somewhere else in order to bring a more or less decent suit for divorce against you. And I am not going to bring the base kind of one here, that our State permits. I'm not going to drag myself through all that wretched mire of publicity. And I have told you why. I may be a fanatic about it——"

"You are," he interpolated grimly.

"But I don't intend to do it. There is one big thing in my life, one big contribution—I mean big from my point of view, not from the world's—that I can make to the world. I don't mean to spoil it for you and Rosamund Ferguson."

They looked at each other bitterly across the pleasant space of the room.

"Very well," he said finally. "I recognize that it's useless to appeal to you any longer. Whatever happens now is on your conscience. I tell you that girl

is no more fit to cope with life than a baby. She needs a home. She will die without it. It's on your conscience."

Anita did not shrink at the responsibility he placed upon her. Her eyes still wore that look of bitter amusement. But gradually her expression softened as she studied him. Even to her, unsympathetic as she felt, he was changed. He was worn and haggard, his face lacked its usual brown and ruddy summer tone. There was a despondent sag to his shoulders, to his lips.

"If she cares enough for you," she flung at him suddenly, impatiently, "to take you for her—for her lover"—she brought the words out determinedly, like one overcoming a repugnance so deep as to be an actual physical barrier—"why, you may tell her, you may understand yourself, that I shall never make the least objection. You tell me she has no relatives, no family. Then she is free of the great obstacles that stand between most women and freedom in such a matter. You needn't look at me like that! I'm not insinuating anything in the least outrageous. I'm giving you a certain other kind of liberty in lieu of the particular sort you asked from me. I assure you that if I stood in her place, alone in the world, with no family to be shocked or wounded or injured by my manner of life, madly and everlastingly in love with a man whom the laws of society would not let me have in marriage—I assure you that I should not hesitate for an instant to do what I have just suggested as possible for you two."

"She is as pure——" began Treadway, automatically angry.

"No one questions that. Of course she is! Every young woman who finds herself in such a position is always a woman like a dewdrop! She's purer than the purest?" Her voice cut like a razor. Then she apologized. "There! I didn't mean to sneer. I know what you mean, and I believe it. But I hon-

estly do not see that there is anything in what I have said to shock you or her. I have told you that if it were possible for me to feel the way you say she feels, I shouldn't hesitate to take life into my own hands in just the way I have said. I shouldn't feel base or cowardly. If love were the whole of life to me, as you say it is to her, and if there were an insuperable barrier—and I assure you that I intend to be insuperable—between me and happiness, I should take my happiness just as I have said. After all, what does it matter, if, indeed, love is the whole of her life? If other things counted with her, it would be different. If she wanted, not you, but your money; if she wanted, not you, but the position of your wife, that would be different. You say, though, that she doesn't. If she wanted anything from life except love and what it brings, it would be different."

"I can't bring myself to say such a thing to her," he declared, as if repudiating the thought. But even as he spoke there was a wavering in his voice.

"If you and she love each other so completely, surely you can say anything to her. You can always put it upon me, you know." She watched him through narrowing eyes.

"There are laws against bigamy," he reminded her.

"I am not proposing that you commit bigamy," she retorted impatiently.

They sat silent for a little while. He was looking off into the space beyond the open windows. She was watching him. She felt curiously absent from the transaction taking place. It was as if she were a third presence watching the other two. And she did not know whether, in what she had said, she had descended to the depths of vileness or had risen to some great, clear height of sacrifice and beauty. She found that some voice within herself was saying: "It is always that way! A poet would make it beautiful, but, oh! how the

ladies' sewing circle would make it sound! And I don't know which I am, noble or lower than the lowest. Anyway, it's for them to decide."

By and by he brought his gaze in from the pleasant countryside. It was midsummer now, and they were at the cottage they had set up among the hills in that long dead and gone past, when they were building not merely habitations, but life together.

"I believe you when you say you would be capable of doing such a thing and of not feeling any smirch or stain," he said. "You are strong. You are a powerful woman and you hold your life in your two hands, so that you could do a thing like that deliberately, splendidly." A shaft of half-unwilling admiration struck into his eyes as he looked at her. "But just because you are that kind of a woman it would never happen to you to have to make such a choice. The whole of life would always be greater to you, more vital to you than any part of it. She—she is different. She is meant for all the old familiar safeties and sanctities. She would want"—the muscles of his throat grew tense; he swallowed hard—"she would want not only me, but children. She would want not only a home, but neighbors, sweet, friendly intercourse, the things that belong to marriage."

"Oh, well!" cried Anita, impatient again. "It seems that she does want a great deal besides love! It makes an impasse. I have told you the truth as far as I am concerned. I am willing to overlook anything, everything. I am willing to give you the utmost freedom. You know me well enough to know that I mean what I say, that I will never repudiate my bargain. Everything is in your hands and hers, except the one thing, the question of my divorcing you. I won't do it, Treadway. And as far as I can forecast the future, and as far as I understand my own nature, I'm never likely to do any-



thing that would justify you in divorcing me. So there we are!"

### CHAPTER XVIII.

He could scarcely believe it. He could scarcely credit his good fortune. Good fortune? Well, good or bad, it was a great fate—to have aroused such love as that of Rosamund's; to feel such love as he felt for her! What had Anita sneered about "great lovers?" He and Rosamund *were* great lovers! Ah, the beauty, the dignity of her sacrifice, her utter surrender! He felt humble. He felt almost frightened. And then he would grow hot and hard with anger against his wife, whose stubborn pride and coldness had put this indignity upon his sweet love.

He had never expected Rosamund to accept that ultimatum of Anita's as she had accepted it. He had delivered it, trembling with the fear that the girl would drive him away again, that this time the final separation of which they had talked would, in truth, be a final one. There had, indeed, been a moment when, hearing that his wife would not divorce him but would, instead, accord him full liberty to live as he pleased, Rosamund's eyes had filled with slow, stinging tears and her childish mouth had trembled, and she had turned from him and had hidden the broken look of her face on bowed arms. He had felt then that he could not bear her suffering, and that he could, more easily, give up his own way of life, the whole imposing structure reared not alone by him, but by his stalwart old father as well; that he could defy Anita and wrest happiness out of the muddle by sheer valiance and sincerity. But, before the impulse of pity and desire had made that offer, Rosamund had turned to him and had said:

"Well, then—if you want it so, Treadway——" And the tears that had flowed unstanched and unashamed

down her cheeks had seemed to him irradiated with the brightness of jewels. That he, Treadway Holt, a commonplace fellow, after all, as he told himself, should have inspired such a love, such a glory of love and sacrifice!

He had promised her, in return for that surrender of hers, everything in the world—happiness and honor, companionship, homely joys, the tenderest care of her name and standing. Only one or two little preliminary lies, and how beautiful the structure that they would rear! Upon a single falsehood they would build them a life of reality, of beauty. She loved the simple countryside. Well, in a village of suitable seclusion she should live, respected, revered, her days full of the delightful, womanly tasks she loved. It need not be far away. He would accept Anita's grudging, ugly gift and would take his liberty. He would go to his own house only when Jamesy or some necessity called him there—a visit from his father, a ceremonial dinner. The rest of his time should be hers, Rosamund's, in the place they would find.

"And until we find it——" she had sobbed, an entreaty in her voice.

"Until we find it," he had assured her fervently, "until we have found it and made it our own, you shall be utterly free. Dearest, most generous of women, could you think that you are less holy to me because we are not going to make our vows before a priest? You are the more sacred!" He had found his own eyes full of tears at the very passion of veneration he felt for her.

Obviously she had been relieved to know that their relation was not to be cheapened, ineffably vulgarized, by minor clandestine meetings, by surreptitious snatches at joy. And they had set about finding the place which was to be a shrine of secret love.

"Only for a little while, though, dearest," he had kept telling her. "Only for a little while! She will come around!

You will see that she will come around! After all, she has never been a mean woman. When her first antagonism has cooled——"

"She will always be hoping to get you back," declared the girl, looking at him with adoration in her limpid eyes, her lips contorted between a woman's smile of possessive pride and the quiver of a hurt, half-frightened child.

"Ah, you love me, and that is why you think so! She doesn't. She doesn't want me; I know she doesn't want me!" He struggled verbally with a bewilderment and resentment that had frequently occupied his mind in these days. He tried now to take Rosamund into his troubled thoughts. "It's like this," he said. "She hasn't loved me for years, hasn't cared whether I was here or there or somewhere else. I don't mean that she disliked me. She isn't an emotional woman. Nature, which is forever tricking the young for its own purposes, made her imagine herself one, made me imagine her one, once in our youth. But she isn't emotional, isn't passionate. She hasn't loved me, needed me, for years. Maybe she herself has not known it. She has been satisfied. She doesn't want her life interrupted, her machinery jarred by any change, that's all. But by and by——"

"Don't talk about her!" cried Rosamund, suddenly vehement. "Don't talk to me about her. I—I—— Don't you know that I hate the thought that she is in your mind at all, even as—even as——" She began to sob and he took her in his arms, and kissed her pale, fair hair as she hid her weeping eyes against his breast.

They found a little cottage in the hills not too far out of the city, a cottage which, he declared, seemed made for the habitation of a love that was to be all the more deep and enduring because it was out of the stream of life. It lay not more than twenty minutes' walk from the post office of a slumber-

ous little village that had somehow managed to maintain a plain and rural aspect on the edge of a countryside given over to great estates. The miracle of its quality, Treadway explained ironically. The natives, he said, avariciously held their property at prices which even the rich, landed proprietors of the neighborhood were unable to pay. But, whatever the cause, the charm was undeniable.

Along the State highway which formed the village's main street there flashed, in the season, the metal and varnish of great cars by the thousand, but not even a tea room or road house invited them to pause. If the perverseness of mechanism forced a stop upon them, the local garage, mending place of innumerable Fords, could seldom furnish further help than to telephone accommodations to the next settlement that catered to the needs of such cars and car owners. The chief connection which South Lisbon essayed to make with the rich and great and traveled, was through piles of ruddy or russet apples, its stacks of golden pumpkins in the fall, lures by which two or three houses on the main street sought to stop the flight of citybound motors.

And twenty minutes away from this hamlet lay the cottage which Treadway bought, swearing that it should be henceforth his true home. It had been a farmhouse long before Washington and Howe contended at White Plains, and it retained the externals of its colonial origin. Internally, however, it had not failed to mark the progress of time. That it had done so inoffensively was largely due to the fact that an artist, captivated by the lines and the loneliness of the house and by the beauty of a little frozen pool he glimpsed one afternoon from the knoll on which he stood, had bought it and remodeled it, preparatory to painting masterpieces and living happily ever after. But, being a person of impulse, he had also fallen victim to

the charms of a lady for whom a remodeled colonial farmhouse on a side road held no permanent lure, so that, after one summer of bickering and wrangling, the little house had stood empty on its slope, amid its old lilac and box trees and under its old, benignant maples.

Rosamund had wept with joy and appreciation and with the poignant sense of self-pity which was always with her now, when Treadway, having found the place, brought her out one mellow, dreamy September afternoon to look at it. It was exactly what she loved, what she had always longed for, she said with a little catch in her voice. Every inch of it—broad, oak-planked floors; big, old, hand-wrought nails; cavernous stone fireplaces; narrow mantelshelves; twinkling, many-paned windows—was what she had always seen, she said, in her visions of a home. In the weedy, ragged, overgrown garden back of the house there still bloomed, though dwindlingly, some blossoms from the time of the artist's brief occupancy.

When they had gone through all the rambling rooms and had excitedly discussed color and furnishings, had had swift visions of exactly the right chintz for this and the right muslin for that, they went out into the garden and propped up the sagging, rotting garden bench with a stone and sat in the sunshine eating sandwiches. They were very gay, determinedly elated. They talked of tiny evergreen plantings, they savored the flavor of the apples on the half-dozen twisted trees of the orchard, they foresaw climbing roses. Perhaps the invariable joy of such planning was heightened for them by the very sense of secrecy, of sacrifice. Perhaps, so subtly perverse is the egoist's desire for happiness, theirs was, for the moment, the more piercing because of the inevitable unhappiness of their lot.

Denying prudence, they sometimes shopped riotously together for the cot-

tage. Rosamund told her lover that never before the time when she had begun to buy for Anita, had she ever experienced the rich satisfaction of spending nearly as much money as she desired to spend upon things that she wanted. For the house at South Lisbon she was always shopping, but not in the usual marts of trade. Out-of-the-way corners of the city, where old brass and copper were to be found, she explored. With bright, glancing eyes she wandered the side streets, keen for modest, dingy upholsterers and cabinet makers. She had admirable taste, and everything that she bought was marked by that passion for perfection, for harmony, which a woman puts into but one house that she furnishes in all her life.

When she had found some particular treasure—settle, andirons, or Staffordshire platter—that seemed to her to belong absolutely to the cottage, she sometimes telephoned to Treadway's office to ask him to come and look at it with her, reserving her decision until he had passed upon it. Treadway loved the sound of her voice on these occasions, the lilt of triumph, of the shopper's sheer joy, combined with a sort of sweet, shy apology. "Am I interrupting dreadfully?" That was invariably the question that followed her salutation. He grew to listen for it, to have formed for it a smile before it came.

"Interrupting dreadfully?" Dear girl! Dear child! When she was fulfilling his life for him; when she was giving him that best thing for which he had always unconsciously longed, and which, but for her, he might have gone down to his grave without tasting. Oh, how he would protect her, save her from pain, from the stabbing of slanderous tongues! He thanked God quite devoutly that he was a rich man and able to sanctify his unlawful love with so many delicacies, so much charm.

One day the telephone upon his desk rang. He felt sure that it was Rosa-

mund. So often had his assurance that it was Rosamund on the wire coincided with fact that he had begun to believe that some peculiar affinity existed between them, even more than that between all the rest of the true lovers in the world. And this time he was right again. There lilted along the wire that little "Oh, Tread," that seemed to enter rather at his heart than at his ear. And then the awaited, "Am I interrupting dreadfully?"

She was not "interrupting dreadfully," he told her for the hundredth time, and, yes, he could meet her at the same place where, the other day, they had found a wonderful old eight-day clock, mahogany-cased, its brass face engraved with cherubs. That was also the place where they had found the seaman's chest, wasn't it, that had proved to be exactly what was wanted for extra rugs and wraps in The Inglenook? Yes, what had she discovered now? A sideboard? He would be there in a half hour.

The shop lay somewhat far over on the East Side. Its presiding genius was a little, dark, wizened Russian Jew who had no particular feeling for the antique, but whose very pulse moved to a bargain. Into his narrow, dark cave of a store all sorts of things, good, bad, and indifferent, found their way, provided only that they were cheap enough in the buying to insure profit on their sale. Rosamund and Treadway had had enough good luck with him, beginning with a prim little mahogany footstool for which he charged her a dollar, thereby netting himself a thousand-per-cent profit on his investment, to insure her visiting him at least every fortnight. He was assisted in his sales by a vast-bosomed, oleaginous wife and sometimes, when trade was brisk, by a sharp-featured son of twenty-odd.

The sale was consummated. The sideboard had been all that Rosamund had claimed for it—old enough and

charming enough and simple enough for the old and charming and simple place they meant to maintain. They had given the final directions concerning its shipment to South Lisbon and had received the last reluctant bit of change from the hand of the dealer. They were lingering in the back of the store, looking at some colored glass which the antiquary's hopeful spouse was trying to sell to them. In the front of the store, the son was answering the questions of a newcomer about a print in the dusty, cluttered window.

"No, Mrs. Rubinsky," said Rosamund, coming to a final decision. "No, we don't want any of that glass."

Mrs. Rubinsky fluently stated her conviction that they would live to regret their lack of foresight in not purchasing such a bargain. They moved toward the front of the store together. As they passed the dealer, he called to them.

"Did de clock come all right alretty, Misder Hamilton?" he asked. "Ve sent him to South Lisbon Saturday alretty."

"Yes, it came all right," said Treadway. At the sound of his voice the dickerer in the front of the store turned, and they looked into the astonished face of Jack Bowman.

## CHAPTER XIX.

Anita, driving up from town, tried to keep her mind firmly fastened upon the triumphant evening she had just achieved. The September night was mild and hazy. The stars seemed few through the faint film of mild air. After she had passed beyond the city's edge, there were pleasant odors—keen tang of chrysanthemums from gardens near the road, fragrance of fresh earth from an autumn-plowed field, waft of late-blossoming honeysuckle from a stone wall, half-acrid, half-sweet scent of smoke still lingering about a brush pile reduced to ash. But she tried to shut her

senses to these things, and to be swayed neither by the homely odors of the countryside nor the blurred mystery of the night. She wanted to keep her mind upon the thing which she had elected to make her life—her work and all that pertained to it. There alone lay safety for her.

That night there had been at Cooper Union a meeting held by her suffrage organization to protest against conditions which had just brought about a holocaust of workers, almost all of them girls under twenty, in one of the city's sweatshops. She had presided, in the absence of the association's chairman. She knew that she had presided well, that every word she uttered struck home not only to the ears of the packed audience, but to their hearts, their intellects, as well.\* She had arranged the meeting herself, had chosen the speakers, had limited the time of the speeches, had planned for the questioning which was to pave the way for the spontaneous questioning of the audience. It had all been well done. There had been passion of feeling, but no sentimentality. There had been cogency of argument, but no intricacy. She had reason to believe that that night marked a step forward for both the causes which lay closest to her heart, the freedom of women, the protection of children.

Once upon a time—such a little while ago!—Treadway would have been with her driving home through the fragrant night. He would have patted her hand now and then; he would have let his pride in her ooze out through a hundred little chinks in his armor of humorous, quizzical matter-of-factness. Where was he to-night? Her physical heart seemed to contract with a spasm of jealousy and distaste.

She had seen very little of him since last month, when, back there in the country, she had flung him the gift of a squalid liberty. She believed that he had taken it, but not for worlds would she

have asked him his decision. And his Rosamund, his pure one—Anita's lips twisted into a sneer in the darkness—she had taken it! Oh, there was no doubt at all about it. He had not spent three nights in his own house during the fortnight since she had returned from the hills. His father was looking anxious and inquiring; Isabel Holt was maintaining an attitude of splendid, polished aloofness; aunt Sally, Delia, and Mrs. Kelley were showing embarrassment as they delivered the almost invariable evening message, "Mr. Holt has telephoned that he won't be out this evening, and that he is spending the night at the University Club." The University Club, indeed!

As if by corporeal effort, she jerked her thoughts back to the scene at Cooper Union. She must not let an uneasy fancy question, a fevered imagination picture, anything concerning them, those two. She must keep her thoughts unsullied and cool. Otherwise she would fail in her work, the work for whose sake she was living through such personal ignominy. She must not, must not let her mind wander in the dark, unlovely purlieus of the world of love, which ought to be so clean and clear and wide. But sometimes nature was too strong for her and brought before her a vision of two faces, ardent, beautiful with tenderness, close together. Where? When? In what form had they chosen to take their liberty?

As the car swung into the drive of her own place, she was slightly astonished to see that not only were the hall lights bright, but those of the drawing-room and library also. She felt a little frightened. Was Treadway at home, despite the message of absence that had been relayed to her office from the house late that afternoon? Was he at home and waiting to renew his attack upon her? She steeled herself for the interview. She would not divorce him, would not, *would not!*





At the sound of his voice the dickerer in the front of the store turned, and they looked into the astonished face of Jack Bowman.

For a second, after she had let herself quietly into the hall, she thought of gliding noiselessly up the stair to her own room. She felt unequal to argument. She hesitated, with her foot almost upon the lowest step. Then she threw up her head with a little gesture of defiance. She was not yet so weak as to postpone an encounter with unpleasantness! Proudly she crossed the hall toward the library in which he would probably be waiting for her. But when she drew back the portières and entered, it was

not her husband who rose from a big, wing chair to greet her. It was Jack Bowman. The ruddy color was drained from his pleasant face, his fair hair stood in tufts above his forehead, as if he had been running his fingers through it. There were deep lines, not lines merely, but valleys, chiseled out beside the mouth that Anita had never seen set for anything but mirth.

"Why, Jack! This is a surprise! Have you been here long?" She spoke almost breathlessly as she unfastened



her wrap of some soft, raspberry-colored fabric and let it fall upon a chair behind her.

"I've been waiting all the evening. I came out after dinner—I mean at dinner time. I don't think I had any, myself. Indeed, I know I didn't!"

"What is the matter?" She spoke more calmly herself now. The sight of him, so utterly unnerved, taught her that she must hold herself steady, whatever it might be that confronted her. "Has anything happened to—Treadway?"

"Something is *going* to happen to Treadway, damn him!" She saw that the young man's pleasant eyes were bloodshot, and when he spoke he uncovered his teeth in a snarl like an animal's. She sat down upon the davenport and faced him. She held her trembling hands folded in her lap.

"What are you talking about?" she said abruptly. "Remember that you are in Treadway Holt's house and that you are speaking to his wife."

"Much he cares about his house or his wife, either!" The man's big, athletic body was shaken as if by an ague. "Much he cares! I—oh, Anita, try to bear with me! I don't know what to say. I am doing this dreadfully! I am hurting you, and you are my old friend. It's horrible, to burst in upon you like this, to tell you dreadful things without preparation! But it's your fault. It's your fault, I tell you!"

"You'll have to be more explicit," Anita answered. There was tumult in her bosom, but her statuesque face was coldly unmoved and she held her hands steady. It was intensely repugnant to her to be discussing her personal affairs, her relations with Treadway, with any one in the world, but this man looked beside himself. He was capable of violence, he was capable, at this moment, of wild, fantastic folly. She must learn what he was talking about. Only

through knowledge could she exert any control over him.

"Do you know what he's done? Do you know what he's done?" He almost shrieked the words at her. "Do you know what that scoundrel has done?"

Anita rose and, moving toward the entrance from the hall, slid the broad, heavy doors into place. This maniac would start scandal, the scandal that she dreaded, that it was the aim of her life to avoid, here, here in her very home.

"Lower your voice," she commanded him sharply. "Please remember that my servants are asleep and that, as they have work to do to-morrow, it is desirable not to wake them. If you have anything to say to me which it is necessary for me to hear, pull yourself together and say it sanely. Otherwise, I am sorry to say I can't be bothered listening to you."

Her manner, imperious, even insulting, acted upon him like a shock of cold water. He seemed to try to resume command of himself.

"I beg your pardon, Anita," he said in a voice again approaching normal. "I've had a horrible shock this afternoon, and I'm afraid that I've been bearing it badly. I'll try to talk reasonably." He paused, as if to take a firmer grip upon himself.

"Wait a minute, Jack," said Anita, more kindly. "You haven't had any dinner. There's no meeting a crisis on an empty stomach. Wait for me a minute." She went out of the room and returned almost immediately with a tray on which were the sandwiches which Delia always left out for her after a late meeting, a glass of milk, and a tiny glass of sherry. "Don't say anything until you have drunk this and eaten a sandwich."

He obeyed her, and there was a moment's silence. When he had swallowed the last crumb, he looked across at her, and for the first time since she had come into the room seemed really to

perceive her—a woman suffering, self-controlled.

"I think I am going to do something, Anita," he began slowly, "which simply isn't done. I didn't remember that part of the case before. A man's friend is not supposed to rush to his wife with stories of his—his—indiscretions is the pretty word for it, isn't it? In the code of the good fellow, the good sport—and I've always supposed that that was my code—a man's friend always connived with the man to keep the wife in ignorance. Pretty flimsy affairs, these codes!"

"Go on, Jack, if you've anything to say," Anita prompted him after a minute or two.

"Yes, the good-sport code doesn't amount to much when the good sport bangs up against realities. Queer! But never mind that. You knew that I was in love with—with—with Miss Ferguson?" He dragged the name out with an effort.

"I supposed so. I was sorry when I thought you hadn't got what you wanted. But perhaps, after all——" Anita left unspoken her criticism of Rosamund.

"I was in love with her and I proposed to her and for about twenty-four hours I lived in a fool's paradise because she had accepted me. Then she turned me down. It was a nightmare. I couldn't believe it. One thing or the other must be an aberration, and it seemed easier for me to believe that the turning down was some devilish delusion of mine. I bothered her for a bit, I am afraid. If I allowed myself to believe at all that she knew what she was doing when she said that her acceptance was a mistake, I put it down to that thing we read about in books—maidenly coyness, girlish indecision. That's what they used to call it, anyway."

"Yes," Anita prompted him again.

"I never had the faintest glimmering

of what the real reason was until today. When she left you so abruptly, I felt half ashamed of myself, because I had been pestering her. I thought maybe she had run away just to get rid of me and my importunities. It was awfully queer, the way she went, with no address that one could get. That is, no address that one could get in any easy, natural way. I didn't dare to ask for it outright because—well, because of the way she had turned me down. But it never slipped out in conversation, either. Once I did ask Treadway what school it was in Philadelphia she had gone over to, but he said he didn't know, and I, poor simp, believed him! I believed that it was you who were her friend and that he wasn't interested enough to have any definite information about her address. Pretty fool I was!"

He clenched his big hands and held them tight upon his knees for a moment.

"I was awfully hard hit by her, you know. You think that I'm a pretty light sort of fellow, as far as girls are concerned. I don't blame you. I was always flitting about, and it's perfectly true, as Treadway used to say, that about two weeks was the length of a really serious affair with me. But—but you see, I really fell in love with her. She was the kind of girl—I mean she seemed the kind of girl," he rasped the correction out of his throat almost like an oath, "that I'd really been waiting for, without knowing there was such a kind in the world. It wasn't just her looks. There are plenty of pretty girls and handsome women. They're common as blackberries. But it was the—the sort of hominess of her. You remember her little songs, old-fashioned kind of things, the sort a man's mother might have sung when he was a little shaver? Not that mine did! And all her pretty little ways about a house?"

"You needn't enumerate her charms," Anita struck in. "I'm familiar with them. I know she gave the impression of being every man's ideal, adoring wife, the ideal, proud keeper of his house, the ideal, devoted mother of his children. Oh, I was familiar enough with her qualities!"

He did not perceive the bitterness and satire in her voice and manner.

"Yes," he nodded, "that's what I mean. She got me, oh, she got me like—like mignonette in a garden, or something in your grandmother's parlor cupboard in one of those rose jars. And yet not stiff, not prim, not antique. Gay as any other girl—fond of fun! I fell in love with her, I tell you, and I've never been able to get her out of my mind, although I've tried, ever since she went away from here. I have tried like a wise man and I've tried like a fool, but neither way helped a bit."

He heaved a great sigh and brought his eyes from the floor at which they had been staring up to meet Anita's dark, burning gaze.

"I saw her again for the first time this afternoon," he went on, and there was no break in his voice any longer. "I was passing a shop away over east in one of the twenties, a sort of junk shop, and I went in to ask the price of a wood engraving in the window. There were some people in the back of the store. I didn't notice them until they spoke. But the man said something and I recognized the voice. It was Holt's, damn him! I turned. I thought you'd be with him. You weren't. She was. Her face was like a lovely rose when I turned first—lovely, flushed, open, happy. Just a rose with the sunlight in it. But when she saw me, all the color ran out of her face and it was stiff and dreadful, a white mask. A white mask of shame! We all said something, and they went out of the shop, and then the horrible little Jew that keeps it said to me: 'Zo you know Misder Hamilton alretty, is it not?'

'Hamilton?' said I. For a second I didn't get wise. For a second I stood staring at the Jew like a boob. 'Hamilton?' Do you see what it means, Anita? Do you see what it means?"

"I suppose that I do," Anita answered unemotionally. But her hands and feet were like ice, and there was a burning behind her eyes. She had known all along it would be true, of course, of course. But now she *did* know; and with that knowledge she plumbed the depth of abysmal difference between the anticipated and the actual.

"You knew? You knew? You're a party to this—this infamous——"

"Don't be ridiculous, Jack." Her voice held again the touch of the lash. "Am I the first woman to know that her husband is in love with another woman? Are you the first man to know that his friend has made sordid love to a woman of his wife's household? How old are you? You are over thirty. You've known of these things since you put on long trousers, I suppose. Boys do, in your world. Why perish of astonishment now?"

"Do you mean to say that you've known all along that they were living together somewhere under an assumed name?" It was his voice now that was contemptuous. Anita's pale face grew a shade more pale.

"I knew nothing of the details; I didn't want to know them."

"But you knew the main fact?"

"I knew the fact that Treadway asked me for a divorce in order that he might marry her. I knew that I refused him one, but gave him permission to—what's the noble phrase?—to live his own life."

He stared at her, dulled with astonishment for a moment. And then he said slowly:

"I never thought you were that kind of a woman! I always thought you were big. Cold, a little cold, but big! That you did things in a large and generous

way. To think that you'd put this infamy upon another woman—you——"

"Please remember that it was quite impossible for me to put any infamy upon any woman which she did not choose to accept. Your—your ideal woman"—she smiled grimly—"had allowed him, my husband, to make love to her before it reached the point of his wanting me to give him a divorce. I couldn't put infamy on such a woman as that!"

"Was that why she left here?"

"It is really none of your business, as I see it. I don't know why I'm answering your questions. If every rejected suitor whom she may have had in the past feels privileged to come here and interrogate me, I shall have a busy life. I don't know. That is, I have forgotten the exact circumstances of her departure. Of course, I suppose this situation was at the bottom of it."

"And you don't mean to do anything about it?"

"What is there for me to do? I stand where I have always stood, doing the things I have always done. It is not for me, who have felt no change of heart or purpose in all these years, to make a change in my way of life. It's for the wavering heart to lead the wavering life."

"You mean to say you are going to take no action against Holt? You're going to let him go on with this disgraceful affair?"

"The affair doesn't concern me any longer. It concerns him and—and—Miss Fergus. It is for her to put a stop to it if she wishes to, when she wishes to. Or perhaps for him. I believe that in these interesting situations it sometimes is the man who places a period to the story."

"You're cold as ice! I don't wonder that Holt had to look somewhere else for a little warmth, a little softness. But, damn him! Why should he have taken her?"

"Because, it seems," said Anita cuttingly, "that she was not only available, but willing."

"You should have kept your husband's love. You and your precious committees! You and your work, your great civic work, your great social work! Where does it all lead you? It leads you to losing your husband. It leads you to debauching a pure and——"

"For Heaven's sake spare me her purity!" Anita struck the end of the davenport sharply with her clenched fist. "Spare me that. And, for the rest, you have no right to talk to me in this manner, and I have no intention of listening any longer."

He rose heavily to his feet and stood looking down at her.

"It seems as if I had never seen you before," he said. "And I have been seeing you for years, or thinking that I saw you. I should have said you were one of the women I knew best in the world. And you're like this. And he, your husband, whom you—you—you alone!—have driven into this sort of thing—I thought I knew him. Well, there's no help to be got from you. I don't understand you. I can't fathom you. You can't want him. You never wanted him. You wanted your damned platforms! And yet you wouldn't let him go, you wouldn't let him go to save another woman's soul! I don't understand you. I don't understand him. Cur! Scoundrel! Whelp! But there's no help to be got from you. I'll have to straighten this thing out myself."

He turned around and appeared to be looking for his hat. He was flushed as if with wine, his eyes were glazed, and he spoke like a man drunk. A sudden panic of terror struck into Anita's heart.

"What do you mean? What nonsense are you talking?"

"I mean," said her visitor with more and more of maniac quiet in his manner, "that I'm going to follow that

Sheraton sideboard to South Lisbon, and that I'm going to kill Treadway Holt as he sits opposite it. 'Hamilton'—'Hamilton!' To think that she could stoop to such a thing as this!"

He moved heavily toward the door and Anita stood staring after him, divided between fright and derision. Fright became the predominating factor in her mood. She followed him swiftly to the door and put a detaining hand upon his arm as he stood fumbling among Treadway's walking sticks for his own. But he shook her off and paid no heed to her words. In a moment the door crashed shut behind him and she stood alone in the hall.

## CHAPTER XX.

In the monastically bare room in which Stephen Watts lived, within sound of the boat whistles and the fog sirens of the East River, there were two or three modern touches. There were a steel filing cabinet, for example, and a big typewriter desk, and there was also a telephone. Stephen, who was working late that night, was moving with papers from the cabinet toward the desk when the telephone rang imperatively. He glanced at the round-faced nickel alarm clock as he heard the sound. It was after midnight. He was not usually disturbed at so late an hour.

He took up the receiver and uttered his unemotional, kindly "hello" into the mouthpiece. At the sound of the voice from the other end of the wire, he sat more erect and looked startled. Anita Holt was speaking to him. He listened attentively, making a mark or two upon the pad at his hand.

"Let me see if I've got this quite straight," he said finally. "You say that Bowman, in a bad state of nervous upset, has just left your house, threatening Treadway, and that you want me to meet him when he arrives in town and to have him followed, and to let you

know if he makes any movement to take a train up the river, or to some place in Westchester, called South Lisbon. Are you sure he isn't in his own car? If he is, of course, I can't meet him. You're sure he is not? There was no sign of it when you got home from the meeting? All right. Have you a time-table there? What time is the next train into the city? Nothing until a milk train that goes through at two-twenty-seven? All right, I'll see if he is on that, and I'll keep him in view. You'd better give me some other clew—oh! I see. Miss Fergus. Hamilton. You poor thing! No, that's right, I won't waste time in pitying you.

"Don't anticipate anything spectacular. Young Bowman never seemed to me the type to go emotionally insane. Oh, drinking hard for some months? That's bad. But you're right. I won't theorize. It is true that you've seen him and I've not. What do you say to my having Heimholz with me when I meet that train, and putting him on the job? Why, of course you do! You know all about Heimholz. My landlord here, and one of the best detectives in the city. Of course you remember! All right. I'll call you up as soon as the train is in. You'll be in to see me at breakfast time, you say? All right. I should like to know a little more of what it's all about, but, on the other hand, I am quite willing to work in the dark if that's the way you want it. I appreciate it, Anita, your calling on me like this. It's the best thing that has happened to me in many years."

He hung up the receiver and stood in thought for a few seconds. "Poor thing! Poor girl!" he said aloud. Then he rose and went out of his room in search of his German landlord.

He was waiting for Anita when her car pulled up in front of his shabby little lodging house at seven o'clock that morning. He answered at once the question written in her face.



"He came in on that train, and I put Heimholz on the job of shadowing him. He will telephone me at the first indication of his meaning to leave town for that place you mentioned. I never heard of it before. However, he made no move in the direction of the country when he came in. Took a taxi down to his rooms. We'd better go to the little bakeshop at the corner for food. Heimholz has their telephone number." He stepped into the big car and slammed the door. Anita gave the direction for the bakeshop at the corner. It was a rather pleasant place with its odors of fresh breads and spicy buns, and with the aroma of good Viennese coffee floating above its marble-topped tables and around its white-tiled walls. After they had ordered their coffee and their coffee cake and their omelet, Stephen repeated what he had said to her over the telephone.

"I can't begin to tell you how it makes me feel, how proud, how happy, to have you call on me when you find yourself in a sort of tight place, Anita," he said.

"It seemed perfectly natural to do it," said Anita.

"And that's all the better. But now will you begin at the beginning and tell me what all the trouble is?"

She went back a few months and told him of the morning when she had first suspected Treadway to be in love with Rosamund Fergus. Briefly, baldly, with no note of self-pity she told how she had concealed her knowledge and how she had undertaken to try to win her husband back. In a sharp sentence or two, she showed Stephen how galling to her pride, to her sense of straightness and fineness, of love itself, the winning-back process had proved. She told how she had gradually given up her efforts, with what relief she had accepted Rosamund's departure from her house, and then she told how, after weeks and months, Treadway had suddenly come to her begging her to divorce

him. And then Stephen interrupted her.

"And you refused?"

"Of course I refused! You know how I feel about it. I feel that no one engaged in pioneer public work has any right to besmirch the causes for which she stands with all the ugliness of her own affairs. We've talked about it before. I meant what I said."

He nodded, and after she had waited, half defiant, for some further comment, she went on with her story. She brought it down to the night before.

"You see what has happened. They are living together. So much I was prepared for, so much I almost knew. He is never at home except for purely formal appearances. And, of course, I suppose I ought to have known that it would be under an assumed name. Only, I hadn't thought of that. 'Holt' is a little too well known, I dare say, for them to set up housekeeping under it. Jack Bowman got it and the address from the dealer in the antique shop. Not very fine of Jack, maybe, and horribly indiscreet of the dealer, but human enough. At any rate, he knows that Treadway and the girl whom he wanted to make his wife, the girl he still idolizes and idealizes, are living together under the name of Hamilton at some place called South Lisbon. And he is determined to do something horrible. What use will my reticence have been if he makes a scandal? Think of it, Stephen! Think of it! I and all that I stand for to be in the very middle of one of those horrible things that shriek themselves across the front pages of the awful afternoon papers!"

He looked at her searchingly for a moment, and beneath his steady, kindly, pitiful gaze, her eyes lost their hard, angry brilliancy, her face its marble immobility. Her lips quivered slightly. She took a great gulp of the hot coffee.

"I've been living under so much of a strain," she apologized, "and I had such





He patted her awkwardly and his face was full of love and pity. "This is the Big Thing for which you lived," he said. "Honesty and unselfishness!"

a wretched night that I'm not quite myself. 'I am likely to make you a scene here, myself.'

He reached across the table and patted the hand with which she was nervously marking patterns on the marble. She withdrew her fingers.

"Don't sympathize with me," she said,

"or I shall go all to pieces. And that isn't the thing to do."

"What do you think is the thing to do? Bowman may be, as you fear, entirely overwrought, and irresponsible. But we'd have difficulty in proving it, I imagine; we'd have some difficulty in putting him away where he couldn't do



any mischief. And if it is still your determination to keep it out of the papers at all costs, I dare say trying to put him away wouldn't answer on that ground. We couldn't move in such a

matter without raising an awful hue and cry."

"What do you think I ought to do?" she asked him, suddenly humble.

"I? Oh, I have no ready-made rules for any situation. You're in the middle of it. You know what to do, I think. If it seems to you best to keep the name of Holt's wife at whatever cost to your own feelings and to his and to that poor girl's——"

"That poor girl's!" Anita flashed

back at him. "She has you all bewitched, all you men."

"No, she hasn't me bewitched. I—I am immune against witchery these good many years now, Anita." He smiled at her half sadly across the table. "But I still think that she's a poor girl, and I should doubt—I should almost doubt—that you are handling the situation in the very best way."

"What do you mean? Are you going back on everything you have ever said? Haven't I heard you, time and again, declare that you believed in celibacy for all sorts of social workers, so that they might have their full energy to put into their work? You never believed in a worker's sacrificing work to personal emotions—never, never!"

"Yes, I have said something of that sort. But, you see, Anita, you're not celibate. You've tangled yourself up in these intimate relationships. You don't gain anything by denying a fact, by trying to live down a fact. As for scandal, there comes a time, or so it seems to me, when scandal is less—less disintegrating, less degrading to the person whom it attacks than is concealment of the situation that makes for scandal. All the argument is with you, I admit. But the facts are with me. This thing is

corroding your nature. It's eating into you. A little more of it and it won't be the same you that gives herself to work. Am I making myself plain?"

"You're making it plain that with you your theories don't stand the test of actual living. But mine do with me." She defied him, though her dark eyes gazed at him through crystal globules of tears.

"Have it your own way, dear girl," he said patiently. "It's you who are going through this hell, not I. You must take the path that seems to you good, and I must not even judge you. Only—only I wish I could take it for you!"

The buxom waitress approached them. She smiled with affectionate friendliness upon her daily customer.

"Mr. Heimholz, he telephones," she announced. "He says tell Mr. Watts he goes again to the Grand Central Station."

## CHAPTER XXI.

As long as she lives the memory of that tumultuous morning will sometimes awake Anita from sleep with a palpitating heart of fear. As long as she lives, its recollection will sometimes suddenly usurp the present and she will be again the thrall of dread and of hurry, of indecision and of formless, anticipated horrors.

They had missed the train to Lisbon which, presumably, Jack Bowman had succeeded in taking. South Lisbon, they learned, was not directly on the railroad line, but had only a bus connection with the station, four miles away from it. There was no other train to Lisbon for three hours. Anita conferred with her chauffeur, and they started in the car toward the place where they expected to find Rosamund and Treadway. Afterward, they asked themselves why it had never occurred to either of them to telephone him at the University Club, or, later, at his office. But the conviction of

his completed sin, the absolute assurance of his double life, possessed them both.

At South Lisbon, two hours later, having threaded traffic with caution and then burned up the miles of white roadway, they found that the bus from Lisbon was not yet in. They asked at a general store—that is, Stephen asked, while Anita sat outside, her nails digging into her palms, her teeth biting into her set lower lip—about the occupation of the Hamilton place.

"They say," Stephen reported, coming out of the store, followed by the curious glances of its clientele, "that they don't know whether any one is living there yet or not. They say that Mr. and Mrs. Hamilton"—he spoke steadily and Anita controlled the nervous jerking of her head by an effort—"have been coming up here a good deal getting the place ready, but they aren't sure they have come here to live. No mail or paper has arrived for them. They say their next neighbor, about a quarter of a mile below them, who has been helping them settle the place, bringing up their stuff from the express office, and all that, may know something. Would you like to leave the car here in the village and walk out there with me? It's only about fifteen or twenty minutes' walk, they say."

Anita assented and, throwing off her motor coat, stepped out of the car and gave some directions to her driver. Blind to the beauty of the little place, blind to the fresh, pearly charm of the bland morning—though by and by she remembered it all, could almost feel the air kind and tender upon her face—they walked out toward the remodeled farmhouse. No smoke rose from its chimneys. Almost all its blinds were closed. There was a packing case on its back piazza. They went up and looked at it. It was a great box directed to "Mr. T. Hamilton, South Lisbon," and it came from "A. Rubinsky." Through a shutter blown open they could look into the

dining room and catch a glimpse of a big stone fireplace and of a corner cupboard glinting with blue chinaware.

Stephen suggested that he would go down the hill to the farmhouse whose roofs were visible and make some inquiries concerning the owners of the place. But, Anita, the strong, the self-controlled, was afraid to be left alone. She walked down with him and she suddenly feared to go on, to hear what the neighbor would have to say. She waited for him, sitting in the warm sunshine near a barberry bush whose berries were beginning to redden. It seemed to her that she had sat there an interminable time before he returned.

The farmer had added little to the story which they had already pieced together from Jack Bowman's talk with Rubinsky and from the Lisbon storekeeper's drawled account of the newcomers to the place. They went back, up the hill, toward the old house standing so peacefully, so graciously, among its trees and big bushes. And Anita began to voice her fear that the stage had come in, and that perhaps Jack Bowman was already at the farm, that he might even have met Treadway and the girl, and that some tragedy, some noisy scandal, had already resulted from the meeting.

But there was no new sign of life about the house, and they settled themselves to waiting, hoping now that Bowman would appear before the others, and that he might listen to reason.

There was a box tree close to the wall of the kitchen L. Once upon a time, before it had grown so large, some owner of the place had put a bench out between it and the house. Now the seat was half hidden by the big, pungently fragrant bush. Anita suggested that they should wait there, out of the immediate range of vision of any one approaching the house. They did so, and time slipped slowly by them, warm with sunshine and aromatically close with

box. They did not talk, though the woman had sought the comfort of the man's kind, reassuring handclasp, and sat holding to him. Suddenly her fingers quivered, jerked from his, and she sat stiffly erect. There was audible the sound of steps upon the bare floor of the room behind them. They waited, frightened, listening. The steps ceased and through the closed blinds came sobbing, a woman's sobbing, and a man's effort to comfort and to stay it.

"Oh, my dear, my dear!" the woman's voice cried at last, in a sort of agony of adoration and pain. "Oh, my dear! I thought I could do it—I thought I could! But I cannot. I am not big enough. I am not brave enough. Oh, I am a petty, little thing, after all! Tread, Tread, forgive me—forgive me! I can't do it—I can't do—" Strangled cries ended her sentence.

Treadway's voice, strong, steady, came out to them.

"There, there, my poor sweetheart! Don't cry so, don't cry like that, Rosamund. You break my heart! My love, my poor, dear little love, you shall never do anything for me which all your heart does not prompt you to do! Don't cry so, dear, my little dear one!"

The sobbing died down, almost ceased, until soon there was left only a tremulous intake of breath like a child's after a fit of weeping. Through the silence broken by that pitiful sound they heard Treadway's voice soothing her. She spoke again.

"Ever since we saw him—saw Mr. Bowman, I mean, in that shop yesterday, I have known I could never do it. Oh, Treadway, I am a coward! I am a coward because I can't come here and live, and love you, and do the thing we planned to do. And I was a coward yesterday because I did not tell you so then, when I knew it, outside that store. What good times we've had there, Tread, buying things, pretty things, darling things!" She

broke into a little cry again, and again he soothed her with tender words. Once more controlled, she spoke again.

"I was a coward then because I did not tell you immediately what I knew—right away. You can see how it was. As soon as any one who knew me, even an unimportant person like him, saw me and looked at me questioning, surprised, at once I knew that I could never go through with it, with our poor, sweet little plan! It's not because I'm good that I can't do it; it's because I'm a coward. I can't even give myself to you, not because it seems wrong to me, for it does not—it does not! It seems right, the way we had planned it. But just the same, I'm a coward. Treadway, any one would be a coward about it who had lived as I have lived. Even she would, Anita, your wife. Even she would be a coward if she knew all that I know."

"What is it that you know, my poor dear?"

"Haven't you ever thought it strange that a girl like me should have no family, no friends, should seem so utterly alone in the world?" she asked him. Her voice was steadier now, and there was a note of honest interrogation in it.

"I was so full of thoughts of you yourself that I never bothered about all the little unessentials about you," he answered.

"It was not strange that she never wondered, Anita," Rosamund spoke half bitterly. "She didn't care. It was nothing to her whether I had friends or not—better not! Friends might be an interruption of my service for her. The more friendless I was, the better. But you—sometimes I've wondered why you never wondered."

"Are you going to tell me about it now?" He spoke soothingly, steadily, like a grown person to a child whom he would comfort after grief, or whose fears he would allay.

"Yes. I am going to tell you now. I want to know what makes me such a

coward that I can't go on with our poor, beautiful, sad little drama of being happy together. Treadway, my own mother did it. She took her fate into her own hands. She wasn't married to my father. They thought, like us, that love was going to be enough and that somehow they would make something big and blazingly beautiful out of what other people only made into ugliness and tragedy. But they couldn't do it! They didn't do it! Listen, I will tell you about it. He was rich and important out there. His name——" Her voice fell lower and the listeners on the bench could not hear it, but they heard Treadway's exclamation. "And he fell in love with my mother and she with him. And his wife would not divorce him, either. It was because she was so religious!"

A thin little note of contempt sounded in Rosamund's tragic tones.

"So they ran away together, and it was a terrible scandal. And they waited for the wife to weaken and to give them a chance to marry. But she never did. They went out to the Pacific islands, and I suppose they had a wonderful year or two. I was born out there. Then they went to China and Japan. They traveled everywhere. They tried to fill up their lives that way. But he couldn't do it. You see, after all, he was a man of affairs, and he wanted to get back to his work, and by and by my mother saw his work tugging at him, and she said they would go back. So they went back home. And for a little while they managed it somehow.

"I have just a dim recollection of a lovely house and a garden and a pony when I was five or six. But then the world—his world—grew too strong for him, and the next thing I remember was a hotel, and, then, after that, just hotels, hotels, and boarding houses, and a man, my father, coming now and then. And then he didn't come any more. And we were always moving. I think often people wanted us to move. You see, his



wife had great influence out there, she and her people. And—and, Treadway, besides that, my mother, my poor little mother, used to drink sometimes."

"Oh, you poor little child! You poor little child!" came in Treadway's voice through the closed blinds. Anita sat closer to Stephen and her hand gripped his knee.

"And then," the sad young voice went on with the dreary recital, "when I was about sixteen she died. And my father had me put in school and made me a very good allowance. But everybody knew the story. I never made friends. It's a little place, out there, in a way. I mean that, after all, there aren't many people. Every one knows every one, and old stories persist and are never forgotten. My father died while I was in college. He had neglected to make any provision for me. Did I say that he had gone back to his own family? He had, just about the time that the moving, moving among the hotels and boarding houses began. Do you see, now, why I am a coward?"

"I see! I see! And I thank God you never set your foot upon that hard road your mother traveled. I love you, Rosamund, and I am not going to let you go one step of your mother's way, not one step along that hard road to Calvary—" His voice broke.

After that there was a silence, and the next sound that the two watchers on the bench heard was footsteps crossing the wooden floor. A door opened and closed, a key grated in the lock. They sat in their shelter, not speaking to each other. After what seemed a long time, when the stillness back of them was the stillness of an empty house, Anita turned to her old friend.

"Let us go back, Stephen," she said. Her voice was heavy, infinitely remote and toneless. "Let us go back. Poor creature! I can't fight her any longer. I give up."

"Anita!" he cried.

"When we get in town," she went on in the same monotonous way, "you will call him up for me, won't you? And tell him—tell him I give up. And tell that Bowman maniac— Stephen, I don't know why I have to let them have their way. I truly do not know. But I have to do it! Poor girl, poor child! Stephen, what a life—that woman's—that child's! And I have always wanted women and children free and happy!"

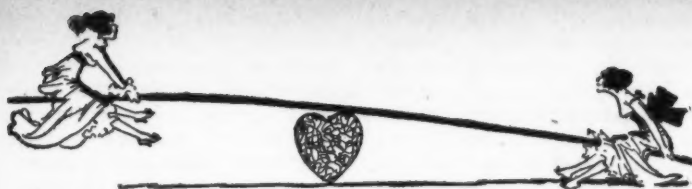
"It's funny," she sobbed, "but as I sit here crying like a fool, I care more for Treadway than I have cared for months! And—it's funny, Stephen!—I don't hate her any longer, don't even despise her. And I suppose it won't make any lasting difference, my disappearance from the ranks of the workers. The work will go on. Do you know, Stephen, I feel a little bit as if I had been fighting all my days for—maybe—something to make railroad travel safe, and that, just when I was about to get my measure through, I had to die, helping a woman out of a wreck. It's crazy, it's crazy—I know it is! But I've got to give up! They shall have their way. How little and unimportant seems everything for which one has struggled, Stephen, when one comes to giving it up! All my causes, the Big Thing for which I lived—"

He patted her awkwardly and his face was full of love and pity. "This is the Big Thing for which you lived," he said. "Honesty and unselfishness!"

"I'm glad we know that it wasn't quite—quite so ugly as we thought, Stephen. Poor Tread!" she ended quietly.

Choosing the path of sacrifice, all that had seemed difficult and intricate suddenly grew smooth to her feet. All the hardness that had incased her heart for many months melted. At the moment of her supreme surrender she was visited by a sudden, strange sense of new enrichment, a promise of new powers.





## Daily Exercise *for* Health *and* Beauty

By Doctor Lillian Whitney

Dr. Whitney is always glad to answer all reasonable questions relating to beauty and health, but she cannot undertake to answer letters which fail to inclose a stamped, self-addressed envelope for reply, or to letters inclosing Canadian stamps. Every week she receives many letters of this sort, in spite of the notice always printed at the end of this department. Sometimes, even, the post office sends notification that letters are being held for her, which careless writers have posted with no stamp. If you have failed to receive a reply to your letter, you may know that it is for one of these three reasons.—EDITORS.

ONE is either too stout or too lean. Rare, indeed, is the woman who retains into maturity the slender lines of youth, unless she has realized early in life the great value of systematic exercise. It is only within quite recent years that physicians in particular, and the public in general, have realized fully the place which light, enforced, daily training of the body occupies in the scheme of personal hygiene, in other words, of health and beauty. The effect of such training is so far-reaching that, once having enjoyed its beneficence, one cannot be induced to give up the half hour thus daily employed.

Before entering more fully into the subject, two conditions must be emphasized. The body should be loosely clad, or better still, not clad at all, and the exercises should be done in a room flooded with air and light, or in the open. The effect of the actual exercise will be

greatly heightened if these details are regarded. In this connection, it is interesting to note that a comparatively new method of treating disease includes the use of color and intense heat in the form of yellow lights and the inhalation of medicated ozone. The results attained are startlingly electrical.

But nature's means are at hand. No one need go to expensive sanatoria for this treatment, because one has but to let the fresh air and the sun's rays strike the nude body, while stimulating the circulation with systematic calisthenics, to produce similar effects.

The ancient Greeks were further advanced along these lines than any other people, and their statues testify to their physical perfection. The Greeks abhorred a physical defect and resorted to exercise as a means of overcoming weakness.

Physicians realize that many ills of the body can be combated more success-

fully by exercise than by any other method. Autointoxication, for instance, from which every one suffers more or less, is simply a condition induced by the retention in the body of waste products that should be eliminated through the natural channels of the system, but which accumulate in every tissue because the body is not sufficiently exercised every day to induce evacuation. As a result of physical activity, the system takes up oxygen, which is life giving, and gives up carbon dioxide, which is poison, and every little cell in the body gives out its quota of waste and takes up a certain amount of air and sustenance. When stifled with stale air, gases, and toxic matter, the cells die or become diseased, and that marks the beginning of ill health.

Exercise is like massage, in that it takes off fat and puts on flesh. Fat is waste. It is an inert substance. It is not, as so many people suppose, flesh. All flesh is muscle. By exercising the muscular system, fat is gradually eliminated, while in lean persons, pure blood and fresh air act as equally powerful stimulants to improve and to develop muscular tone.

In most people, especially those of sedentary habits, the internal trunk organs are never exercised. Every one, of course, does a certain amount of enforced walking, but few people exert themselves physically more than is absolutely needful to the accomplishment of their daily tasks. Ordinary physical activity is not exercise. It is merely a routine, automatic procedure, performed with scarcely a knowledge of the will. In other words, the everyday movements of the body are performed almost involuntarily and, as physical and mental stimulation, they are as unprofitable as standing before a beautiful painting with eyes closed. One often hears some one remark that he secures enough exercise, as the work in which he is engaged keeps him constantly on his feet.

Housewives are especially apt to hold this opinion. But vigorous, systematic, daily body training, with such superlative tonics as fresh air and sunshine, is quite another matter.

Summer is an ideal time in which to begin a regimen of this kind, for the more direct rays of the sun are not only highly electrical, but they penetrate more deeply into the tissues; and the warm air enables one to do with a lightweight covering which offers no resistance to light and heat. Very early morning hours are the best, as the atmosphere is rarified and sparkling with sunshine and dew.

One of the first things to learn is to hold the body properly. Thin women slouch and contract the chest; stout women slump. In both, the organs of the trunk are compressed and do not begin to function to their full capacity. Throw the weight where it belongs, on certain organs and sets of muscles. Flatten the abdomen, throw the chest out, shoulders back, hold head erect, and practice the position until it becomes natural. Pace around a room before a mirror, noting the marvelous changes in carriage and poise; the new lines and curves which so simple a thing as holding the body correctly gives one.

To be sure, the posture will be tiring at first, as the many formally unused muscles are weak, but strength will come through use. Before long, the heart and lungs, doing better work, will impart a delightful lightness and buoyancy to the step.

Stout people should keep moving and should learn to walk with greater speed and facility. The shortness of breath often experienced by the obese fades away as bodily poise is acquired and the organs assume their normal positions.

The stout are often round-shouldered, while the lean suffer from a forward stoop. Each position contracts the chest. A shoulder brace is a valuable aid to-

ward acquiring the erect posture. It should not be worn as a habitual thing, for then the object sought is not gained, and the brace defeats its own end. It should act merely as an aid, and not take the place of the muscular structure. After wearing a simple brace for a week or two, it can be discarded, as by that time the habit of holding the shoulders up and the trunk erect will have been acquired.

The following exercises, by developing poise, will correct many physical ailments, such as weak lungs, indigestion, sluggish liver, as well as poorly shaped backs.

For the first exercise, assume the correct standing position, with the arms relaxed at the sides. Take a long, slow inhalation, at the same time raising the arms to their greatest height overhead. Then lower them, meanwhile exhaling. With a little practice, the lungs can be filled to their greatest capacity with fresh air while raising the arms, and completely emptied while lowering them. Repeat from fifteen to twenty times. Do not hurry. Concentrate the mind on the benefits to be derived.

Mere mechanical raising and lowering of the arms will produce little good, but with thought upon the results desired, combined with the rhythmic exercise and deep fresh-air breathing, a wonderful change will be effected, as these simple movements expand the chest, develop the soft structures, and make for a more becoming contour. Also, by such exercise, the lungs are fully ventilated, each little cell being inflated to its capacity with pure air. The organs of the trunk are lifted out of their compressed positions and also given new life.

The next exercise begins with a deep, full inhalation, at the same time raising the right arm overhead. Hold the breath and reach out to the highest imaginary point overhead. Do not move any other portion of the body; the lift should be

from the abdomen. Lower the arm while exhaling and repeat with the left, alternating from one to the other six times.

The third exercise is similar to the first. Inhale, stretching both arms overhead, palms upward. Now hold the breath, bring the arms down, crooking the elbows as the hands reach the shoulders. Hold the position, exhale, and return arms to original position.

Again, inhale deeply, with arms raised overhead. Then clasp the hands, retain the breath, and slowly sway the body from the hips only, to right and to left. Exhale, while lowering the arms to first position. When proficient in these simple movements, practice them as if pushing an imaginary weight upward with the hands.

It must never be forgotten that bodily contour is very much of our own making. True, inheritance plays a prominent part, but inherited tendencies can be overcome with patience and perseverance. They require more time and attention, perhaps, than those for which we are ourselves responsible, but, properly dealt with, they will yield.

Many women and young girls have quite high "stomachs." The condition is a result, in most instances, of corpulency, an excess of adipose tissue—fat—in this region of the body, but, in young people, it is more often caused by faulty carriage. To overcome this condition, lie flat upon the back, slowly raise both legs to a perpendicular position, then gradually lower them to the floor. It is not so easy as it sounds. Repeat ten times, thereby decreasing fatty deposits and imparting tone to the abdominal muscles.

Now assume the erect position. Inhale deeply and raise the right knee as high upon the chest as possible. Hold three counts, lower to the floor, exhale, and perform with the left leg. Then alternate, raising each ten times. This exercise promotes bodily poise to a

marked degree, and has a decided effect upon the muscles of the hips and upper thighs. When large, this exercise trims them down; when thin, it develops the muscles and covers the bones.

After poise has been gained to such an extent that this exercise becomes easy, try clasping the knee with the arms, pressing it firmly to the abdomen. Inhale, while raising the knee, and hold the breath while hugging the knee, using considerable force. In this manner all the muscles from the neck down are brought into active play.

How many people possess beautiful backs? A well-known artist critic declares that no woman can be considered beautiful whose back is not well modeled and covered with just enough and not an ounce too much muscle. With the transparent fabrics and the extremely low décolletage now in vogue, it behooves every woman seeking a fine development to look well to her back.

The back must be properly proportioned to the remainder of the body. The shoulders should be no wider than the hips. The natural curves of the back must not be pronounced, otherwise they degenerate into defects. A straight, flexible back is the ideal to be sought after. The flesh must be firm and white. Rolls of fat seen upon dowagers and middle-aged women are painful reminders of indulgence in table luxuries and ease. On the other hand, winged shoulders too often bespeak bodily infirmities, impoverishment of the blood, or general inertia.

Serious curvature of the spine is very frequently the result of faulty position in youth and a lack of proper exercise during the period of adolescence, when the great muscles of the trunk should be symmetrically developed in out-of-door exercise.

The exercises already prescribed will do much toward correcting minor defects of the back, because nothing accomplishes this as surely as habitually

carrying the body in perfect equilibrium. Drooping or round shoulders and general body slumping puts an extra tax upon certain groups of spinal muscles and leaves others unused. Shiftless habits of carrying the body make for actual deformities. It cannot be too often asserted that a well-poised body and consequent graceful carriage are the greatest beauty assets woman can possess.

The following exercises will not only correct all spinal troubles not caused by actual disease, and mold the back into beautiful, straight, symmetrical lines, but will also have a beneficial effect upon the great vital organs:

No. 1.—Lie flat upon the floor, face downward. Clasp the hands behind, resting them upon the back. Raise the feet, then the legs, the head, and shoulders, all at the same time, in an effort to bring them as close together above the spine as possible. Hold, while counting five. Then relax and return to original position. Repeat from five to ten times, striving each time to accomplish better results.

No. 2.—Lie flat upon the abdomen, on a broad armless chair. Brace the feet. Then lower the head and shoulders in a relaxed manner to the floor. Now make tense all the muscles of the neck and upper trunk and slowly raise the upper part of the body *against resistance*, in an effort to bend the body backward from the waistline. Relax and repeat five or ten times. This exercise not only melts off fat across the shoulders and bust, but markedly improves the general contour, covering scrawny shoulders, backs, and throats with firm flesh, and rounding out the tissues generally.

No. 3.—Stand erect, with feet firmly planted on the floor. Extend both arms over the head and bend the body forward from the waist, until the fingers touch the floor.

When this exercise becomes easy, im-

prove upon it by throwing the trunk back as far as possible, then, when bringing the thorax forward, sway lightly to the left, stretching the hands downward in an effort to touch an imaginary object upon the floor, just beyond reach. Resume original position and repeat with body swaying to the right.

This exercise stretches the muscles and ligaments of the spine, producing the straight, slender back and flank so much sought after to-day.

All these exercises can be endlessly varied, but if they are carried out daily, in accordance with the suggestions herewith given, they lay the foundation for enduring health and beauty.

## WHAT READERS ASK

**NEW YORK.**—Here is a lotion for perspiring hands: Boric acid, 80 grains; borax, 12 grains; salicylic acid, 150 grains; glycerin, 2 grains. Heat the glycerin and add the other ingredients to it.

**ADDIE X.**—Dull, lifeless-looking hair which is, nevertheless, healthy in growth, can be greatly improved by applying brilliantine. A curling fluid will also help to retain the wave longer. I will gladly send you formulas for these if you apply for them, inclosing a self-addressed, stamped envelope.

**JENNIE C.**—When lips give unusual trouble in cold weather, the trouble can generally be traced to systematic conditions; that is, an undue amount of acidity—caused by overloading the system with heavy foods—indigestion, and sluggishness of the liver and intestinal tract. Of course, it goes without saying that treatment directed to the underlying conditions will, of itself, correct the lip trouble, making local treatment unnecessary. Chapped lips are healed more quickly with camphor ice than with creams. Many creams are soothing and act as preventatives, but when the lips are actually chapped, the drying, astringent action of camphor is more healing. The application of camphor to an open sore will cause it to smart for a moment. Sometimes the lips crack in the same place until an appreciable "crack," extremely painful, results. Very often a chronic condition ensues, and in such cases careful attention should be given the lips. An excellent remedy, and one found to be equally beneficial, is salicylated liquid collodion. This should be painted over the crack with a fine camel's-hair brush. It forms a skin impervious to air and moisture; and meanwhile healing takes place underneath.

**MABEL.**—You have been using too much soap. Avoid it for a while and use cleansing creams instead. If you object to creams, try meals such as almond or pistachio.

**Mrs. R. M.**—Yes, Vaucaire tonic is a general developer. If you want purely local measures for developing the bust, proceed as follows: Melt two ounces of coco butter and two ounces of lanolin in a double boiler. Remove from the fire, stir in two ounces of oil of sweet almonds, and beat until cool. At night, bathe the bust with warm water and massage gently with this cream, employing circular movements around the breasts. In the morning, bathe the parts in very cold water, douching with a heavy sponge or with a sprinkler attached to the cold-water faucet. Follow this by breathing deeply for five or ten minutes before an open window. I shall gladly mail you directions concerning Vaucaire tonic and a list of breathing exercises, if you wish.

**READER.**—An adult requires three-thousand cubic feet of fresh air per hour. Few of us get it, spending most of our time in close rooms as we do. We should walk at least two miles, regardless of weather, every day. We should also practice breathing exercises at an open window every morning. I shall be glad to send you a list of breathing exercises.

**GRAY HAIRS.**—No, I have no dye for coloring faded hair permanently. Most dyes used for this purpose contain dangerous poisons. I have a harmless formula for a gray-hair restorer, directions for making which will be sent on personal request.

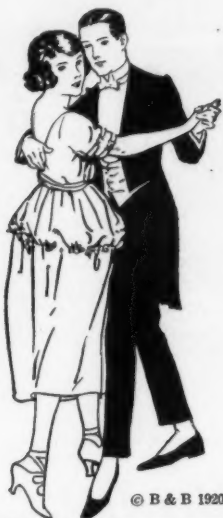
**DISFIGURED.**—The only thing I now recommend for the removal of superfluous hair is a wax, concerning which further information will be given on direct application.

Doctor Whitney will be glad to answer, free of charge, all reasonable questions relating to beauty and health. Private replies will be sent to those inclosing a self-addressed, stamped envelope. Do not send Canadian stamps or coins. Address: Beauty Department, SMITH'S MAGAZINE, 79 Seventh Avenue, New York.









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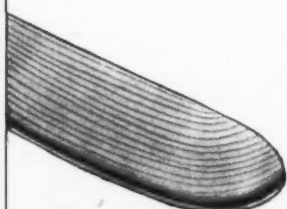
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“I used to laugh at the idea of my ever having that much money invested. I was just scraping along in routine work and spending what little I earned. Then one day my employer gave me some advice that really marked the beginning of things for me. He said success depended on two things. First, learn to do some one thing well, so well that others will pay you for what you know. Second, save and invest something out of what you earn each month.

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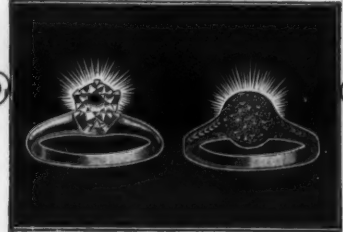
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**Rug No. 1** A gold seal "Congoleum" one-piece Art Rug. You know that the name "Congoleum" means quality in floor covering, is sanitary and very easy to keep clean. There is no burlap so water will not injure it. A damp mop keeps it bright and clear at all times. It will lie flat on the floor and is sun and water-proof. Comes in 9x12 ft. size. **Order by No. 51BBMA4S. Price \$10.00.**

**Rug No. 2** A splendid reversible standard size, 9x12-ft. wool and fibre rug made of carefully selected vegetable fibre and wool, woven into a rarely artistic oriental pattern of unusually rich coloring. **Order by No. 17BBMA50. Price \$21.45. Send \$1 now; bal. \$2.80 monthly.**

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**Rug No. 4** A Medallion Pattern Tapestry Brussels Rug. Beautiful combination of colorings. The medallion center is rich and pleasing, neatly arranged border; closely woven yarns; 9x12 ft. **Order No. 22BBMA17. Price \$29.95. \$1 now; bal. \$2.75 monthly.**

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3913 Westworth Ave., Dept. 2770 Chicago

Enclosed is \$1.00. Send the Rug marked X below. I am to have 30 days' trial. If not satisfied, will ship it back and you will refund my \$1.00 and pay transportation both ways. If I keep it I will pay the amount named each month until full price is paid.

<input type="checkbox"/>	Rug No. 51BBMA4S. Price \$10.00.
<input type="checkbox"/>	\$1.00 down; balance \$2.80 monthly.
<input type="checkbox"/>	Rug No. 17BBMA50. Price \$21.45.
<input type="checkbox"/>	\$1.00 down; balance \$2.80 monthly.
<input type="checkbox"/>	Rug No. 22BBMA9. Price \$26.95.
<input type="checkbox"/>	\$1.00 down; balance \$2.75 monthly.
<input type="checkbox"/>	Rug No. 22BBMA17. Price \$29.95.
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Ask Your Druggist for A-K Tablets  
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correct acidity, thus regulating the  
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For night watchmen, policemen, sportsmen, soldiers,  
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Look for the store with the Ingersoll display.

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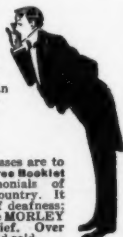
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Take Tablets without Fear if you see the "Bayer Cross"

For Headache  
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Insist upon a  
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Directions.  
Proved safe by  
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Price \$2.50 to \$10.00. Sold on 30 day trial with money back guarantee.

### Simple as A B C

You simply run the COWAN through your hair. Done in a few minutes. Time saved—lots of money too, at the price for hair cuts nowadays. You ought to see some of the letters we get from people who said it "so didn't be done." Guess some of them never would have tried a Cowan if it hadn't been for our

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Will distribute 100,000 Demonstrators (not guaranteed) at \$1.00 each to prove it can be done.

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YOUR skin can be quickly cleared of Pimples, Blackheads, Acne Eruptions on the face or body, Enlarged Pores and Oily or Shiny Skin by a new treatment called

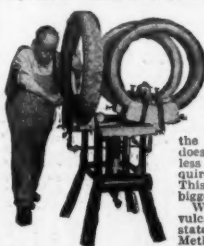
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It costs you nothing to investigate this wonderful opportunity. Write today for full particulars and address of Anderson school nearest you.

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Print Your Name to Avoid Mistakes

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"Bee-Vac" Electric Vacuum Cleaners have sold faster than we have been able to manufacture them. Merit alone has done it.

Today, with a manufacturing capacity four times greater than a year ago, we want hundreds of thousands of other women to know about the "Bee-Vac."

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A few cents buys "Danderine." After an application of "Danderine" you can not find a fallen hair or any dandruff, besides every hair shows new life, vigor, brightness, more color and thickness.

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for Coughs & Colds

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**A**N indestructible mantle of pre-war quality at the pre-war price. They save money by their extremely low cost and because they use only two-thirds as much gas. Remember the names and the boxes!

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In the Square Box with the Blue Label—10's

*"The Lights That Give"*

### LOTOLYT Gas Mantles

In the Distinctive Triangular Box—20's

*Gasolite sold at Woodworth, Kroger, Murphy, Ryan and Beall Stores. Lotolite at Kruger's, Good Samaritan, etc. Or send us on receipt of price. Dept. 255*

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Manufacturers of the Wonderful  
Usalite Gas Mantles



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Earn \$100 to \$400 a Month**

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*Sweeney*  
SCHOOL OF AUTO-TRACTOR-AVIATION  
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Money back if you're not satisfied

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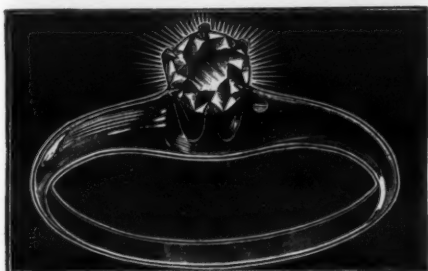
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28x3	\$ 5.95	\$1.50	34x4	\$10.95	\$2.55
30x3	6.25	1.70	32x4 1/2	11.15	2.55
30x3 1/2	6.35	1.95	32x5 1/2	11.45	3.10
32x3 1/2	7.35	2.15	32x4 1/2	12.55	3.25
31x4	8.95	2.45	32x4 1/2	13.00	3.35
32x4	9.95	2.55	32x5	13.45	3.45
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### Reliner FREE with each tire

Send your order today—sure while these lowest prices last. State size, also whether straight side or clincher. Remember, you need send no money, just your name and address, and tire with free reliner, will be shipped same day.

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### Just Released

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### Write at Once for Great Diamond Loan Bulletin

Write us for our splendid Bargain Bulletin of marvelous diamond values. We have loaned money on valuable diamonds for more than one-third of a century. See for yourself how much cheaper you can buy from us. Write today.

Send your name only for the latest bargain bulletin. Lists newest bargains in diamonds. Fresh from the press. Great values just released, but only a few. Write in now before you're too late. Hurry.

L. Goldman's Sons, Goldman Bldg., Dept. 1407 Kansas City, Mo.

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while you sleep"



Best Laxative for Men,  
Women and Children.  
10, 25, 50c—drugstores.

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## The Dollar Value of High School Training

**HAVE** you ever thought *why* so many employers demand a High School training of their employees—why the lack of it bars you from the best positions? Take English and Mathematics, for example. What high-grade position—such as accounting, engineering or executive work—can be handled *rightly* without a knowledge of mathematics? How can costs, operating expenses and overhead be accurately computed without it? How can you write good business letters and reports or sell goods without a command of English? There is a positive cash value to having a High School training. It means many more dollars to you, because it throws open to you high-grade positions from which you are now barred.

### Don't Be Handicapped

Thousands like YOU—who were laboring under the handicap of not having had a High School training—have taken advantage of the American School course and REMOVED THEIR HANDICAPS. This course has been specially prepared for home study by noted professors. It is complete, covers all requirements, and will remove the biggest obstacle between you and success.

If you have already had some part of a High School Training, you can start in exactly where you left off. We'll credit you with what you have taken and make the tuition fee in proportion with the special course you require.

### Read this Guarantee—then Act

"We guarantee at any time during the first year of your enrollment to refund the entire amount paid if, immediately upon the completion of ten examinations, you notify the School that you are not satisfied with your course."

AMERICAN SCHOOL of  
Correspondence  
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CHICAGO



TRAINING—THE KEY TO SUCCESS

Please send me booklet and tell me how I can fit myself for the position marked X

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| ..... Automobile Engineer              | ..... Accountant and Auditor                  |
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| ..... Sanitary Engineer                | ..... Com. School Branches                    |
| ..... Heating and Ventilating Engineer | ..... Electrical Engineer                     |
| ..... Master Plumber                   | ..... Electric Light and Power Superintendent |
| ..... Civil Engineer                   | ..... Hydroelectric Engine                    |
| ..... Structural Engineer              | ..... Wireless Operator                       |
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Name .....

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## A Big Raise in Salary

Is Very Easy to Get, if You  
Go About It in the Right Way

You have often heard of others who doubled and trebled their salaries in a year's time. You wondered how they did it. Was it a pull? Don't you think it. When a man is hired he gets paid for exactly what he does, there is no sentiment in business. It's preparing for the future and knowing what to do at the right time that doubles and trebles salaries.

### Remember When You Were a Kid

and tried to ride a bike for the very first time? You thought that you would never learn and then—all of a sudden you knew how, and said in surprise: "Why it's a cinch if you know how." It's that way with most things, and getting a job with big money is no exception to the rule, if you know how.

### We Will Show You How

Without loss to you of a single working hour we can show you a sure way to success and big pay. A large number of men in each of the positions listed are enjoying their salaries because of our help—we want to help you. Make check on the coupon against the job you want and we will help you get it. Write or print your name on the coupon and send it in today.

### American School of Correspondence

Dept. G-74, Chicago, Ill., U.S.A.

### American School of Correspondence, Dept. G-74, Chicago, Ill.

I want job checked—tell me how to get it.

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.....Building Contractor.....	\$5,000 to \$10,000	.....Mechanical Engineer.....	\$4,000 to \$10,000
.....Automobile Engineer.....	\$4,000 to \$10,000	.....Shop Superintendent.....	\$3,000 to \$7,000
.....Automobile Repairman.....	\$2,500 to \$4,000	.....Employment Manager.....	\$4,000 to \$10,000
.....Civil Engineer.....	\$5,000 to \$15,000	.....Steam Engineer.....	\$2,000 to \$4,000
.....Structural Engineer.....	\$4,000 to \$10,000	.....Foreman's Course.....	\$2,000 to \$4,000
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.....Certified Public Accountant.....	\$7,000 to \$15,000	.....Sanitary Engineer.....	\$2,000 to \$5,000
.....Accountant and Auditor.....	\$2,500 to \$7,000	.....Telephone Engineer.....	\$2,500 to \$5,000
.....Draftsman and Designer.....	\$2,500 to \$4,000	.....Telegraph Engineer.....	\$2,500 to \$5,000
.....Electrical Engineer.....	\$4,000 to \$10,000	.....High School Graduate.....	In two years.
.....General Education.....	In one year.	.....Fire Insurance Expert.....	\$3,000 to \$10,000

Name..... Address.....

Classified Advertising—Continued.

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112 pages wonderful values, diamonds, watches, rings, jewelry, up-to-date designs. Buy the WareWare you will never miss the money. Get posted, write today.

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We have an interesting, pleasantly written little book which contains educative matter of prime interest to those nearing or past the middle of life. It is a book concerning health and vigor, and a simple drugless treatment that cannot interfere with daily work or even your doctor's care. It has saved untold suffering, and has delighted thousands. Prescribed by hundreds of physicians, chiropractors, osteopaths, physical culturists, used by intelligent laymen all over the world. The book is free. Just say: "Send me

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Not a book about infectious venereal disease, but valuable to those suffering bladder weakness, declining nerves, or those contemplating an operation. Address

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maintains his store at considerable expense. He must pay for help, rent and lighting. He carries many articles that you would never dream of ordering direct from manufacturers, and is, therefore, of great service when you need a newspaper, a cigar, or a box of stationery. Then why not give him all of your custom and so help make his business profitable? Tell him to show you samples of Ainslee's, Popular, Smith's, People's Favorite, Top-Notch, Detective Story and Picture-Play magazines. Select those you want and he will gladly deliver them to your residence regularly.

**STREET & SMITH CORPORATION**

**Publishers**

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## WHITING-ADAMS BRUSHES

Are credited by a distinguished competent authority as being **THE BEST IN THE WORLD**. Made of highest grade pure, stiff bristles. The handles are beautiful tropical woods in highly finished ornamental shapes. They conform to the old proverb, "A thing of Beauty is a Joy forever." For sale everywhere.

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Brush Manufacturers for Over 110 Years and the Largest in the World

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REDUCE TIRE COST 65%

**GOODYEAR  
Tubers  
FREE**

### 5000 Mile Guarantee

Akron Quality Tires are made to meet the increasing demand for reconstructed tires which are indispensable to the maintenance of the auto industry. Their great economy is your personal advantage. To insure properly built and carefully selected goods always order Akron Quality Tires. Shipped direct from factory to you.

One tube given with each tire	
30x3	\$ 7.50
30x3 1/2	8.50
32x3 1/2	9.70
31x4	10.90
32x4	11.20
33x4	11.50
34x4	\$11.85
34x4 1/2	13.55
35x4 1/2	13.90
36x4 1/2	14.50
35x5	15.45
37x5	16.50

**Reliner Free With Every Tire**  
State whether straight side or clincher desired. Send \$2 deposit for each tire ordered, balance C. O. D. subject to examination. If you send full amount with order, deduct 5 per cent discount.

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at home in spare time as you would in actual practice.  
**MEN AND WOMEN IN GREAT DEMAND as Mechanical Draftsmen.**

**Salaries \$35.00 to \$100 a Week**

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When you have read this copy of SMITH'S, buy a copy of **Popular Magazine**. It's full of variety, and every story in it is **interesting**. It will give you excellent reading until the next number of SMITH'S is out.



## Oh, You Skinny!

Why stay thin as a rail? You don't have to! And you don't have to go through life with a chest that the tailor gives you; with arms of childlike strength; with legs you can hardly stand on! And what about that stomach that flinches every time you try a square meal? Are you a pill-feeder?

Do you expect Health and Strength in tabloid form—through pills, potions and other exploited piffle?

You can't do it; it can't be done.

The only way to be well is to build up your body—all it, through nature's methods—not by pampering the stomach. It is not fate that is making you a failure; it's that poor emaciated body of yours; your half sickness shows plain in your face and the world loves healthy people. So be **HEALTHY—STRONG—VITAL**. That's living. Don't think too long; send three 2c stamps to cover mailing expenses of Special Information on Thinness and my book, "Promotion and Conservation of Health, Strength and Mental Energy," written by the strongest physical instructor in the world.

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Physical and Health Instructor

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Get to  
Solid Gold

Get to  
Solid Gold

### Send Your Name and We'll Send You a Lachnite

**DON'T** spend a penny. Send your name and finger also and say, "Send me a Lachnite mounted in a solid gold ring on 10 days' free trial. I'll send it prepaid right to your home. When it comes merely deposit \$4.75 with the postman and then wear the ring for 10 full days. If you, or if any of your friends can tell it from a diamond, send it back. But if you decide to pay it—send \$2.50 a month until \$15.00 has been paid. **Write Today** Send your name now. Send things illustrated above you wish (indicate man's). Be sure to send your finger also.

Harold Lachman Co., 22 N. Michigan Ave., Dept. 1927 Chicago

## Everything About Cuticura Soap Suggests Efficiency

Soap, Ointment, Talcum, 3c. everywhere. For samples address: Cuticura Laboratories, Dept. D, Malden, Mass.

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## As a matter of fact

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**YOU'LL** swing into the Camel procession as easily and as delightedly as any of the thousands of smokers who have found these cigarettes an absolute revelation in quality, in refreshing flavor, in mellow mildness and in body!

Camels are unlike any cigarette you ever puffed. They are a creation—an expert blend of choice Turkish and choice Domestic tobaccos. As sure as you are a foot high you will prefer Camels blend to either kind of tobacco smoked straight!

Camels fit in with your cigarette desires just one hundred per cent! The satisfaction they impart to smokers is simply joyous.

Camels will not tire your taste! And, Camels leave no unpleasant cigaretty aftertaste nor unpleasant cigaretty odor.

You'll prove out our enthusiasm when you compare Camels with any cigarette in the world at any price!

*Camels are sold everywhere in scientifically sealed packages of 20 cigarettes for 20 cents; or ten packages (200 cigarettes) in a glassine-paper-covered carton. We strongly recommend this carton for the home or office supply or when you travel.*

**R. J. Reynolds Tobacco Co., Winston-Salem, N. C.**

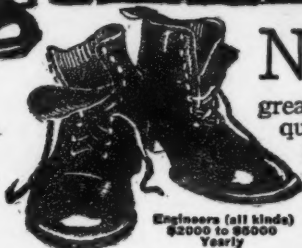
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\$1800 to \$5000 Yearly



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Engineers (all kinds)  
\$2000 to \$5000 Yearly

# Learn to Fill Bigger Shoes

**N**O matter what kind of work you are doing now, a set of these great home study books will quickly fit you for a bigger and better paying job.

We will send any set you select for one week's free examination, and if you want to keep them you pay

only the special reduced price—at the rate of 75 cents a week. This is your opportunity to make more money—grasp it NOW. Use these books and a little spare time and **LEARN TO FILL BIGGER SHOES.**

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Write the name of the books you want on the coupon and mail it today. We will send the books at once, express collect, and you can use them just as if they were your own for a whole week. If you decide you don't want to keep them, send them back at our expense.

**75 Cents a Week** If you like the books, as thousands of other men have after examination, just send us \$2.80. You can send the balance of the special reduced price at the rate of \$3.00 each month (75 cents a week).

Start right now and learn to fill bigger shoes. There will be a better job looking for you if you do. Be ready to meet it when it comes. *Send the coupon now.*

**AMERICAN TECHNICAL SOCIETY**  
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THE  
COUPON  
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# The Brunswick Method of Reproduction



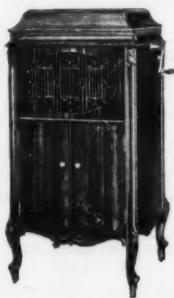
## It Plays All Records

*A better way*

One of the great features of the Brunswick Method of Reproduction is the Ultona, pictured above.

It brings two dominant superiorities. First, it plays all makes of records in a better way. At a turn of the hand, it presents the proper diaphragm and needle. It does away with attachments. It is instantly adjustable.

Second, it is the only counterbalanced reproducer. By counterbalancing we do away with that old-time rigidity that brought "surface" noises, "scratching" and disagreeable undertones. The needle travels over the undulations of the records properly cushioned.



The Ultona, with all its advancements, is an exclusive feature of The Brunswick. It is one of the greatest advancements in phonograph history. It makes old ways out of date.

Brunswick tone is infinitely better, as your first hearing will prove. Here, you will agree, is a super instrument, with every acknowledged betterment, *plus* finer cabinet work, for which Brunswick has long been famous.

Visit a Brunswick Dealer. Hear this amazing phonograph. Then you will find your ideal of a phonograph.

Ask also to hear Brunswick Records—likewise superior. They can be played on any phonograph with steel or fibre needles.

THE BRUNSWICK-BALKE-COLLENDER COMPANY

General Offices: 623-633 S. Wabash Ave., Chicago

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**Brunswick**  
PHONOGRAPHS AND RECORDS

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Pure FRUIT CANDIES

THINK of how your favorite  
fruit delights the palate  
when in season!

The memory still lingers.

Recall the actual taste with  
Charms. Charms—made of  
pure sugar and fresh, luscious  
fruit flavors—are always in  
season.

Crunch them between your  
teeth or let them slowly melt  
in your mouth. Whichever  
way you prefer to eat them—  
The Flavor Charms.

Sold most everywhere. In  
handy packages, banquet tins  
and cartons.

MADE IN NEWARK, N. J.  
THE CITY OF  
CHARMS

The FLAVOR  
CHARMS





Sleep nights  
Keep awake days  
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**INSTANT POSTUM**  
*Instead of Coffee*

